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KINGS OF DIVERSE
HISTORY OF SUBVERSION SERVICES OF RUSSIA

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Dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the Vypmel special forces unit

FOREWORD

This book is about saboteurs, about honest and courageous sons of the Motherland, patriots of Russia. Little has been written about them. They were unfairly badly written about. Even in their own family of scouts, they were the most "closed", forbidden, secret. For many years, bit by bit collecting materials for the book, I have often thought about the fate of saboteurs in Russia. Indeed, in the post-war decades there was an official opinion that there were no saboteurs in our country. Even encyclopedic dictionaries asserted: sabotage is one of the methods of subversive actions of imperialist intelligence and special services.

It turned out that not only the imperialists ... And what, in fact, are we worse? They have saboteurs, spies, all sorts of rangers, "green berets". And we, it turns out, have nothing to cover.

I hasten to reassure the reader: there was always something to cover. I hope it will be in the future too. If we, of course, not in words, but in deeds, want to become a power. No, not a great one (whether to think about it now), but simply a power.

After the events of 1993, the opinion prevailed in the leadership of Russia: reconnaissance and sabotage units do not fit into the system of democratic values. Let me emphasize: not democratic values in general, but our most "advanced" demo values. They are, as you know, special. After all, the Americans, despite their "first-rate" democratic values, managed to convince the planet that their special group "Delta" is almost an ambassador of peace. And about what

Delta saboteurs are fierce defenders of democracy, they have been telling us for decades.

But we are not Americans. And therefore, intelligence, and with it the reconnaissance and sabotage service, undoubtedly experienced the most difficult stage in its development. Academician

Yevgeny Primakov, at the time of his leadership of the Russian foreign intelligence service, wrote: "There were two periods in the history of Russian intelligence when the need for its existence was either not realized or was questioned." "Only" two periods in history! The first stage was still during the formation of the Russian state, when our state as such did

not yet exist, and, of course, intelligence too. Centuries have passed since then, and I repeat, the question of the expediency of reconnaissance has never been raised. And in the 90s of the last

century, we witnessed this madness - in Russia, the rejection of intelligence, which, supposedly, is not needed in the era of "civilized relations", was strongly preached. We can only guess about the irreparable losses of our intelligence in the course of pursuing this "civilized" course, but something is already known. The reconnaissance and sabotage service suffered extremely heavy losses. A

small department that oversaw this direction under the First Main Directorate of the KGB was closed.

In 1993, the Vympel reconnaissance and sabotage unit was handed over to the police. Although by that time it had other tasks and was focused on the fight against nuclear terrorism. Miraculously, they did not manage to get to the GRU special forces brigades. And a little over a year later, in December 1994, the war in Chechnya began. What is this? How to explain all this? Really democracy? But then why in the

countries of "two hundred years of democracy", such as, for example, the United States, the question of whether or not to be intelligence was not raised at all by sabotage units? Never. Nobody. So, Russian saboteurs. We still know very little about them. Well, except perhaps partisan sabotage on the railways during the war,

the exploits of Nikolai Kuznetsov, and one or two actions that have become famous in recent years. Such as the assassination attempt on Trotsky, the murder of Bandera. That, perhaps, is all.

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Names? Only a few names have come down to us: Heroes of the Soviet Union Nikolai Kuznetsov, Dmitry Medvedev, Stanislav Vaupshasov ... Ilya Starinov, who was called the "saboteur of the century", died recently. Having strained, probably, we will remember a few more names. But what is behind them, perhaps, we remember with difficulty. .

And behind them is glory. But the assassination of Trotsky cannot be called glory. However, this is also our story. And we have no right to judge those people casually, without delving into the essence of the phenomenon. And in order to judge with knowledge of the matter, one must at least know the matter.

Saboteurs. What lies behind this frightening name? Often saboteurs are confused with terrorists. Rather, the terrorists are stubbornly trying to pass themselves off as saboteurs. Remember how the same Basayev in the first Chechen war, at every opportunity, stubbornly repeated into the TV camera: "I'm not a terrorist, I'm a saboteur"? Are the people I want to tell you about really akin to a bloody

Chechen murderer? If someone, deluded, thinks so, then even such a thought is insulting to these courageous people.

Yes, in war, as in war. Happened, and they killed. But in a fair fight. History does not know of a case where a Soviet or Russian saboteur covered himself with the bodies of innocent women and children. They did not seize hospitals, buses, planes with people in

order to put their selfish demands on a mortal bargain. They never acted on behalf of a bunch of madmen who decided overnight to rebuild the world or become fabulously rich, paying for unbridled ambitions with other people's destinies.

They always acted on behalf of their state. Another thing is that the state did not always give them righteous orders. Not always righteous from our current point of view, from the height of current morality. But, alas, man is not free to overtake his time. So who are they all the same - Russian saboteurs? First of all, scouts. In

their work, they rarely had to act with an open visor (what can you do - intelligence has its own laws) and almost always - under the legend, posing as God

knows for whom.

And this means that they are not just scouts, but illegal immigrants, in other words, top class scouts. 7

Imagine a man who was born in an ordinary Russian family of a serviceman from Minsk and pretends to be a well-born German baron. Hard to believe. But this is a fact. I am familiar with such a "baron". Very pleasant person, very easy to communicate with. But this is

with me, but with the barons he was completely different. This is the art of intelligence. So, a saboteur is first and foremost an illegal intelligence officer, and secondly, a militant.

Although, to be honest, I'm far from sure if it's the second? After all, he needs to quietly and imperceptibly approach, fly up, swim up to the object and mine, blow up, disable. Just leave quietly. And this means that he must be a hardy walker, a skilled swimmer, a brave parachutist, a well-aimed shooter, a skilled demolition

man. But is it possible? Can one person do it all? Isn't it fiction of journalists and writers? Yes and no.

Those who write about intelligence almost always feel a lack of documents, which is often compensated by an excess of fantasy. I would like to move away from this tradition. However, do

it will not be easy: the profession of a scout is surrounded by a halo of heroism and romance. In my opinion, this is how it should remain. Of course, not to the detriment of the truth.

Yes, writing about intelligence is difficult. About the reconnaissance and sabotage service is doubly hard. This is the most secret of the secret services, the holy of holies of intelligence.

And let the documentary evidence is still for the family, but what kind of family is there, behind the seals of the seventies. But, fortunately, people are still alive. Saboteurs of the 30s, 40s and later. They agreed to share a lot.

The author does not claim to be complete. This is only a small fraction of the huge work of our intelligence and sabotage service. Most of what has been done, apparently, we will not know soon. If, of course, we find out at all. It's a pity.

This book is just a desire to reveal a great storehouse of unknown pages of our history.

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PART ONE THE PEOPLE OF THE LEGEND

Novels are written about them, legends are composed. They are credited with fantastic feats, sometimes comparable to the deeds of mythical heroes. When you get to know

these people, reality seems to fade into the background, and it is already difficult to understand - where is the truth, where is fiction, and where is the legend.

The name of these people: partisans, scouts, "walkers", masters of sabotage.

otherwisefighters, of the special forces, the invisible war, superhumans, destination.

Special forces law: they see everyone, no one sees them.

Special forces motto: anytime, anywhere, any task. SWAT loves the people.

After all, it is in him, in a soldier of the special forces, that the world, weighed down by base worries, sees the image of a seemingly primordial man. Strong, fearless, dexterous, able to survive in any, the most incredibly difficult conditions.

The profession of a special forces soldier, like no other, needs legends, the most incredible legends. And they live on Earth, these legends.

But are stories about superfighters so fantastic? When you get to know them better, you understand: the stories of their exploits are quite vital and real. For often the most violent fantasy is not able to keep up with reality.

Still... Our commandos overcame all unthinkable levels and belts of protection of the "atomic capital" of the country "Arzamas 16" and captured a nuclear weapon. They came from under the

water and "fell" from heaven on the heads of the "terrorists" who had taken "under arrest" the atomic icebreaker "Sibir". Landed in coastal waters from a submarine and, pre

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having overcome miles of the stormy sea, they dragged the vigilantly guarded secret carrier from under the nose of the guards.

The list of these, no doubt, glorious deeds can go on and on. But, admit it, aren't they fantastic? And yet they were made by people. Soldiers of the Special Group

appointment of the KGB of the USSR "Vympel".

This unit, born in the bowels of illegal intelligence, has always worked under the heading "Top Secret. State importance.

Established in 1981, its roots go back to the distant twenties, when a reconnaissance and sabotage detachment appeared on the Western Front, called the "Illegal Military Organization" (NVO) by Felix Dzerzhinsky. Even the commander of the front did not know about the existence of this organization among the troops. The most severe secrecy, total secrecy was maintained for almost 70

years. Only today, at the end of the 20th century, have we learned something about the reconnaissance and sabotage service of the Soviet Union and its unique formation. The modern history of the division cannot but delight. It consisted of first-class combat swimmers,

parachuting masters and hang gliders, miners and demolition workers, snipers, experienced communications experts, and linguists. The analytical service of the unit, accumulating the latest intelligence, as early as 1990 predicted the possibility of unleashing a civil war on the territory of the republics of the Soviet Union.

The scouts created the film "According to the received data" and showed it to the members of the Defense and Security Committee of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR. It was a warning

movie. The politicians didn't believe it. Politicians did nothing to prevent war.

Detachment "Vympel" was, without a doubt, and remains a unique unit. Although he was born in the early eighties, not from scratch. He has many predecessors, both in current history and in the past. Including in the deep past.

Special forces have always existed. In any case, exactly as long as armies exist and wars are waged. Of course, these were not special forces in the modern, classical sense. However, every military leader

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kept with him the elite, the best parts. They were the last hope in the difficult, critical minutes of the battle. They could join the battle

first, or, conversely, last, to act from an ambush or to be introduced into a breakthrough.

Epaminondas, the commander of the ancient world, on the eve of the battle with the Spartans, secretly changed the oblique order of the phalanx. On the left wing, he built a quadrangle (column) with a depth of 48 ranks, the middle and right wing had only 8 ranks. Pelopidas' elite squad, his best fighters, he placed on the edge of the left flank. The column attacked from the front. "Special Forces"

Epaminondas struck powerfully from the flank and rear. The Spartans were overwhelmed and fled. 6 thousand Thebes defeated the ten thousandth Spartan army. Carthage gave

the world the greatest commander of antiquity - Hannibal. In the battle of Cannae, which entered the history of military art, 48,000 Roman soldiers were killed and 6,000 were taken prisoner. Experienced, skilful African veterans played a decisive role in this battle. When the Roman phalanx stopped under pressure from the rear of Hasdrubal's cavalry, the Africans attacked from the flanks. And if the extreme ranks of the Roman legionnaires still somehow resisted, the rest became targets for flying darts and arrows.

The grenadiers of King Louis XIV went into battle ahead, throwing grenades at the enemy. And in the parade, they marched in the front ranks, showing off their bearing and smart uniforms. Under Peter I, during the Great Northern War, cavalry grenadier companies

were formed from the most experienced and brave dragoons. And on the eve of the decisive clashes with the Swedish troops of Charles XII, three horse-grenadier regiments were created in the Russian army, and in each dragoon regiment - a separate grenadier company. Having the best horses in the entire army, the grenadiers played the role of shock special forces. Indeed, to throw a heavy, kilogram

grenade, considerable strength is needed, and even more - skill and dexterity. The slightest mistake, a mistake could cost

life.

The "special forces" of Peter I trained not only themselves, but also horses. After all, nearby grenade explosions, firing over the ear could frighten the horses. That is why combat stallions were trained in conditions close to combat, among explosions and shooting.

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In constant exercises under the guidance of experienced grunts, combat techniques were honed: attacks at full gallop, when at the same time you need to have time to throw a grenade with your right hand and shoot from your left hand, throw with your left when you use a broadsword in

your right ... And much more that you should know and be able to "special forces" of Peter the Great. It should not be forgotten that the grenadiers performed not only "their" direct duties - they broke into fortified positions, held gaps until the main forces approached, but also worked, for example, as naval paratroopers, built fortifications. What to do, such was the era!

Peter's grenadiers went into oblivion, but the "special forces" remained. In the age of Catherine, they were huntsmen. For the first time rangers, selected shooters, terrifying the enemy, were "brought" by the famous military leader Pyotr Panin in his Finnish division. A total of 5 people per company. But the experience was crowned with unprecedented success, and already in 1765, separate jaeger units of 65 shooters under the command of an experienced officer were created in 25 infantry regiments. "The appointment of rangers,"

writes a well-known military historian

Anton Kersnovsky, - was to serve as skirmishers and fight not according to the Prussian model at "thirty paces", but according to their own Russian skill, with "charge speed and integrity of the butt". Fundamental changes in the mission of special

forces were made by the 19th century. The armies became more and more massive. The fighting acquired hitherto unknown spatial scope.

Military campaigns dragged on for months, and even for years. The outcome of a campaign did not always depend on a decisive battle. The front broke away from the rear and became more dependent on it. Advanced military minds understood that a unit operating in depth, on the paths of the enemy army, is capable of inflicting significant damage on the enemy and disorganizing his rear.

Life showed the brightest examples. Marshal Murat defeated the regular Spanish army in 6 days. The victory went to Napoleon's favorite easily and without loss.

It seemed that Spain was at the feet of Napoleon. But unexpectedly, the country broke out in a fierce, uncompromising guerrilla war against the conquerors.

To take Madrid and capture the ruling dynasty, the French emperor had 80,000 corps, but then he "fought" Spain for another six years with 200,000

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army. The winner of Europe did not manage to completely deal with the Spanish Guerillas.

This means that if ordinary peasants are able to fight against a regular army under the leadership of an undoubtedly great commander, then how effective will be the opposition of a well-trained military unit.

However, any commander was aware that actions in the rear, in the midst of enemy units, are an extremely dangerous, difficult matter that requires special training. Therefore, the best of the best should go there... So, in fact, it happened. The first practical deployment behind enemy

lines of sabotage detachments was carried out by none other than the commander-in-chief of the Russian army in the war of 1812, Field Marshal M. I. Kutuzov.

According to Kutuzov's contemporaries, it was a brilliant experience of joint actions of mobile military and local peasant partisan detachments. It is known that of the 600 thousand troops that went on a campaign against Russia, Napoleon brought only 140 thousand to Borodino. The French commander largely attributed these losses to guerrilla warfare. In a letter to Marshal Berthier, he lamented: "Note to the Duke of Elchingen (Ney) that he loses more people every day in foraging than in battles."

Well, the number one Kutuzov "special forces" was, of course, the famous partisan and poet Denis Davydov. He commanded the best military detachment operating in the rear of the Napoleonic troops.

Even then, Denis Davydov realized that "partisan warfare consists of neither very fractional nor paramount enterprises, for it is not engaged in burning one or two barns,

disrupting pickets and not delivering direct blows to the main forces of the enemy. In his "Military

Notes", the famous partisan leader defined the main task of the sabotage forces: to cut off enemy troops from their sources of supply. The urgency of this task is constantly growing, because the modern army is extremely dependent on rear support points.

If in 1812 pistols were not brought in the wagon train, Davydov's hussars could also chop with a saber. Today the checker is not in use. Just as a modern missile carrier is essentially blind without ground services, so the army organism is dependent on the rear.

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But in order to confront the rear of a modern, well-equipped and trained army, the fight behind the front line must be carried out by professionals. I would say high professionals of special forces. Here is how special forces officer Nikolai X. said about his task in a newspaper interview: "In

the event of a "mess" or shortly before it, special groups are created from the storerooms who have undergone appropriate training, in fact, these are the backbone of partisan detachments that settle in the occupied territory. The GRU brigades "work" relying on these detachments and the illegal agents of the GRU. Of course, this does not exclude the right of every honest citizen to take up arms and defend the freedom and independence of the Motherland, but relying only on the people's militia is at least short-

sighted. Most of it is criminal. We already went through all this in the forty-first, when we frantically tried to form partisan detachments from scratch. Meanwhile, the enemy was moving across the Baltic states, Ukraine, Belarus.

After World War II, the world entered an era of local conflicts. And special forces - scouts, saboteurs, partisans were again in demand. China, Korea, Vietnam, Angola, Mozambique, Afghanistan... Then there was Chechnya. The first, now here's the second... It turns out that the special forces have such a fate: to be always at war. "Vympel" was also born in the war. After all, it was the fighting in Afghanistan that prompted the leadership of the KGB to create a mobile, highly professional reconnaissance and sabotage unit.

On August 19, 1991, the former head of Directorate "C" - illegal intelligence of the KGB of the USSR, Major General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov was going to the anniversary. Ten years old was his "Vympel" - a group of special forces, which he created, fostered, raised to his feet.

The life and history of Vympel began, which in the current, 2001 marks the 20th anniversary.

THE FIRST "CALL"

General Yuri Drozdov is rightfully considered the father of Vympel. Yuri Ivanovich is a unique personality -

artillery officer who went through the Great Patriotic War,

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illegal intelligence agent, our resident in the US and China, head of Office C (illegal intelligence). He led the operation to take the palace of Amin. On his return home, he was received by Andropov. "On December 31, 1979," Yury Ivanovich later wrote

in his memoirs, "Vadim Alekseevich Kirpichenko and I, in the presence of intelligence chief Vladimir Aleksandrovich Kryuchkov, reported to KGB Chairman Yuri Vladimirovich Andropov about our participation in the Afghan events. After the end of the conversation, I said that it is necessary now, evaluating this experience, to think about the formation of a special personnel unit in the KGB system. Yuri Vladimirovich looked at me without answering a word.

In mid-January, another meeting took place. I have already come with a paper in which the idea of \u200b\u200bcreating Vympel was outlined. On August 19,

1981, at a closed joint meeting of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU, it was decided to create a top secret special forces detachment in the KGB system to conduct operations outside the USSR during the "special period". After that, Andropov, handing over the documents on the formation of the

detachment, said to Drozdov: "Work, create! And so that they were not equal.

However, it is easy to say, but not easy to do. Where to find such how to teach people

To begin with, they decided to "plant" Vympel at the old sabotage base in Balashikha. There, at one time, personnel were trained for the war in Spain, "Sudoplatov" scouts, including Nikolai Kuznetsov. True, little remains of that educational and material base of the 30s. Well, we had to create a lot ourselves. They cut down the forest, built a shooting range.

One of the biggest problems at an early stage is the selection of commanders and fighters. They were called in the unit "special intelligence officers." The title meant a lot. To some extent, they tried to combine the hitherto incompatible - the functions of an ordinary intelligence officer operating under a "diplomatic roof" in calm, peaceful conditions, and a saboteur who is in the midst of "acute events".

At first, Vympel's support units served and soldiers, but later only officers were recruited. Moreover,

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if "Alpha" was formed only from KGB officers, then the "Vympelovians" selected candidates in the border troops, in units of paratroopers, pilots, and sailors. Psychological tests included various tests, such as the

Kettel questionnaire, Rorschach blots, the Raven technique, and a polygraph test. Knowledge of a foreign language was also required. It would be desirable, of course, to know a foreign

language at the proper level. But who is in that

time could master in our country a foreign language at the "level"? Only those for whom he was a profession. Only volunteers were enrolled in Vympel. In any case, that was

the setting from above. She was mainly guided in the selection of candidates from the border troops or the army. Sometimes they were tricky with the "committees". In order to attract some valuable employee, it happened that they promised benefits. And what benefits at that time were the same salary, the same living conditions as everyone else, that is,

But business trips abroad, the opportunity to later work in the First Main Directorate - this attracted me. Something had to be promised. But this, of course, is for individual fighters. Basically, there was no shortage of those wishing to serve in Vympel. Therefore, the dropout turned out to be not small.

In a word, they chose the best of the best. Well, as you know, at that time the KGB, the border troops, the army and the navy were far from the worst. Vympel had several sets. The first of them took place in a fairly short time: the war in Afghanistan grew, the need for workers, special forces soldiers was extremely acute, and there was no need to think about it. This is how reserve colonel Vladimir Vasilchenko, who at that time was the head of the operational-combat department, recalls this.

V operational

- For the first "call" to the unit, the deadline was very tough. This was dictated by the need to send people to Afghanistan as soon as possible.

Around February 1982, 75 people came to us. It's hard to remember now how many candidates we "shoveled" but the recruitment turned out to be quite good. Prepared for three months. There was no time for more. Already in April, the first 123 people left for Afghanistan. But we selected the second "set" more carefully and longer, in fact, the entire rest of 1982. Well,

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of course, prepared more thoroughly. One detail is very important - by that time, based on the experience of the war, we realized what we need to give our soldiers, what they need for successful work "across the river." "Thus," General Yu. Drozdov later recalled, "Vympel was created on the basis of decisions

of the country's Defense Council to carry out assignments abroad. The state, using at least one person from this unit, had to impose on itself - and assigned - a very high responsibility. Orders to conduct operations could only be given by the chairman of the KGB, and only in writing. There were no equal fighters of this unit. And according to the degree of readiness to take risks, and according to the degree of operational invention, intelligence resourcefulness. They proved their right to exist and proved their right to be proud of their profession and their skills. The main feature of Vympel was that it was a thinking force, able to independently comprehend any task, make the right decision and

bring it to life.

To this day, they treat their potential adversaries with great respect, because they know firsthand about their experience, their methods, tactics, abilities, skills: some Vypel employees underwent (naturally, illegally) "training" in NATO special forces units ". If other special forces units that existed at that time in the USSR and abroad were intended primarily to complete the task at the

implementation stage, then the "Vypelovtsy" went through the decision-making stage, they could independently collect information, evaluate it, develop an action plan and complete the task worthy way. During the development of a solution, a creative approach played a huge role: to introduce something special, unexpected, non-standard - a distinctive quality of the "Vypelovtsy".

The principle of selecting employees in a group differed from how it was done, for example, in the USA or England. On the one

hand, the Vypel command had little to do. known about the system of the British or Americans. The same head of the unit, Captain 1st Rank Ewald Kozlov, could not, like Beckwith, attend an internship in the SAS regiment and gain experience there.

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On the other hand, there was no time for a long buildup. The Afghan war required special forces specialists.

Therefore, during the selection of fighters for Vypel, the commission, which at first consisted of KGB personnel officers, later of the leaders and most experienced officers of the unit, could not, for example, choose only one, or even not a single fighter out of 40 candidates, as happened in English SAS.

Here is how one of the eyewitnesses describes the selection of soldiers in the SAS regiment. "I witnessed such cases when, after passing the selection tests, not a single soldier was taken to the SAS. No one! All 40 candidates were sent back to their regular military units, and these were candidates who came from selected English units.

Examinations for the title of a special forces soldier of the SAS included the most severe check of physical data. Thus, the ten-day examination marathon ended with a march of 45 miles and a duration of 24 hours, during which the soldier carried a bag weighing 55 pounds plus a weapon of 9 pounds. At the same time, a trick was used: the fighters were not

indicated the time in which they had to meet, although they knew perfectly well that time was limited. Thus, each of them was forced to go as fast and as long as he could.

The "survivors" after the march became the object of the most severe test of intellectual capabilities. A whole team of specially selected officers and soldiers played various situations. So, a task was set for a group of scouts: they are on patrol in East Germany and must blow up

oil refinery. On the way to the object they come across two girls 14 and 1-2 years old. What will the commander do: kill them, take them with him, leave them, tie them up? Of course, there is no definite answer here.

Just as carefully selected fighters in the "Delta" and the Americans. "We developed a special test," recalls the creator of this reconnaissance and sabotage unit, Colonel Charles Beckwith, "which included six stages. At each stage, the recruit must score a minimum of 60 points in order to move on to the next.

They had to crawl 40 yards on their back in 25 seconds, crouch 37 times and push-ups 33 times - each exercise in a minute, agile run with jumps over rough terrain for 24 seconds, two-mile cross 18

swim 100 meters in full gear in 16 minutes 30 seconds. After that, the Delta candidates

went through an 18-mile forced march, a cross in the woods with a map. "Those who successfully overcame this route were subjected to a thorough psychological test. We needed people not only physically developed, but also mentally gifted," concludes Colonel Beckwith.

The same gifted people were needed in Vympel. Tem moreover, that all of them had to go through the Afghan war.

The requirements are extremely strict. Higher education. Physical health, endurance, fitness for airborne training. They took into account that the employee could subsequently serve in the unit for at least 10 years, that is, we were talking about people 25-27 years old.

The command and instructor staff could be a little older. "They

taught hard at Vympel," says General Drozdov. - The process of training (according to an individual program) for a "citizen" student took five years. It took two years to "finish" a graduate of the Ryazan Higher Airborne Command School. General physical training, multi-kilometer forced marches over rough terrain, including

those with full gear, strength exercises (pulling up, climbing a rope, exercising in the gym), jumping from elevations from half a meter to two and a half meters, general developmental exercises. Hand-to-hand combat training is not on soft carpet, but on asphalt. Shooting from everything that shoots: pistols, grenade launchers, domestic and foreign-made machine guns, special weapons, etc. Driving cars and armored personnel carriers. Mine-

explosive business, including methods of making explosives from household chemicals. Training in radio business: free work on radio stations of any type, both in plain text and using Morse code. Studied encryption

case. They mastered the radio direction finder and eavesdropping devices. The state and the leadership of the State Security Committee paid considerable attention to the unit. Despite financial difficulties, a high level of training and equipment was achieved, the quality of equipment and sleep gradually improved

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dressings, provision. In addition, Vympel employees, as users, themselves participated in the development of weapons and equipment, gave technical tasks to designers who made special products according to their orders.

Tactics of combat operations of small groups. Airborne, Fundamentals of intelligence and Preparation, rock climbing. medical counterintelligence activities. Information and analytical work. Outdoor surveillance.

Study of foreign languages and country studies. In "his" country, an employee of the special forces should in no case be "lit up". And not only because of incorrect pronunciation, which, it should be noted, was generally excluded under the intensive system of teaching foreign languages. It was necessary to navigate freely in everyday matters, not to feel like a "black sheep" among the local population, to know the history of the region, national customs, national psychology - everything that could be useful for collecting and analyzing information, recruiting agents among local residents, etc. Each operation was carefully thought out. Even such "little things" as fillings in the teeth, cut of clothes were provided. ("Vympel" had dentists specially trained through foreign intelligence channels, and its own sewing workshop.) The technique of survival in extreme conditions was carried out in winter and summer in wooded and swampy areas, mountains, deserts, tundra ... "In the formation of the unit and in gaining of operational and combat experience, Afghanistan strongly "helped". Almost all Vympel employees underwent a "run-in" not only during exercises, but also directly

during the hostilities. There was already a Zenit, a Cascade was working in Afghanistan. With the creation of Vympel, a practical test of instructions for the KGB special forces

began, which were still being prepared and tested. Over the years, it was also possible to check the combat suitability of the American regulations written by them for their special units. This made it possible to quite consciously look at the enemy, especially since the "Vympel" had to constantly resist American intelligence and subversive activities.

So Vympel was born, passed the test of strength in the flames of the Afghan war.

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Saboteurs also want to live

Remember, Alexander Vasilyevich Suvorov: "It's hard in

learning, easy in battle. A true formula, gained by war, tested by blood. But what does this formula mean in everyday life? Special forces, after all, are people too. Don't fight want to live.

And that means it is hard today, tomorrow, morning and evening, and even at night. Annoying, this "hard" becomes a bone in the throat. And all right, if there is still a battle ahead, in which it will be easy after hard exercises, but if behind? .. It turns out that from the point of view of routine being, the Suvorov theory is collapsing. Strange thoughts. But it just so happened that in the spring of 1983 they relentlessly pursued the leaders of Vympel.

What exactly happened this spring? The first group of "Vympelovites" returned from Afghanistan. Instead, the newcomers left, and the "pioneers", having spent their vacations, as it should be for military personnel, arrived in their native unit. That being said, to go further...

These were already completely different fighters than a year ago, because then at Vympel, to be honest, they didn't really know what to teach them. There was no experience, Afghanistan was just beginning. Now history was repeating itself. Everyone who planned and organized combat training imagined what to prepare future "Afghans" for. But no one knew how to teach those who returned from there. The last unit, at least somewhat reminiscent of Vympel, was dispersed thirty years ago, and therefore the theory, the training methodology simply did not exist. Practice even more so. There was another very difficult circumstance. Imagine an officer, a senior lieutenant who went through the war, who has experience in combat and operational work, who, like a rookie, is put into service. And if it's not a "starley", but a major, and even an order bearer? .. But you had to put it into operation. Including in the literal sense. Yes, Vympel is an officer unit. At first, there were conscripts in the regular staff, but then they came to the decision - to complete the unit entirely from officers and ensigns.

The tactics of any reconnaissance and sabotage unit are based on actions as part of a group, that is, several people in the role of saboteurs, led by a commander.

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Each one has an exceptionally high responsibility, because the search is conducted deep behind enemy lines, in isolation from the main forces.

However, in the course of training, the bulk of the officers have to be in the role of an ordinary intelligence officer. And this is where the Suvorov rule comes into play: "It is hard to study ..." And you have to cram conditional topographic signs, scale, measurement of distances. Yes, just like at school the multiplication table ... And this is a front-line soldier, a Chekist, an "opera", who went through fire and water, and copper pipes too. Is it conceivable?

Oh, how many copies were broken in disputes about the necessity or uselessness of another academic discipline! Arguments from the most scientific to the simplest, such as "and this is not needed ..."

Okay, what do you need? The Vympel commando must be able to carry heavy loads? Must. But to be able to recover, navigate the terrain, read the map? .. Who will say that he should not? Agreed. But it was hard to convince. In England, for example,

in the special forces, called the SAS, they were convinced in a different way. Here is

how Colonel Charles Beckwith, who in 1962 completed an internship in one of the regiments of the English SAS, tells about this: "I had been in the camp for ten days when I was informed that a training session on working with the map would take place. The purpose of the

exercise was to test the ability of soldiers to navigate in difficult terrain using a compass and a simple diagram. The task assumed that the soldiers did not have a specific military map on a scale of one inch equals one mile, but rather a small diagram with the designation of the main features of the area. In addition, the north direction indicator has also been shifted. For me it was real

field work.

When, at nightfall, every one of the soldiers left the vehicles, each of them was given a map of the area and indicated where and from where he should get in a certain period of time. Master Sergeant Ross did not tolerate any questions. "This is your assignment. You are here. And this is the checkpoint where you should be tomorrow morning, and you need to hurry. That was it. The soldiers disappeared into the night. If they didn't want to be late; then they were forced to flee most of the night, carrying heavy

duffel bags and personal weapons. 22

The next morning we found them in a state of complete exhaustion. I looked at the routes, checked the distances: they really ran a lot. If a soldier was late for the meeting place, they did not wait for him. If a soldier

was not only late for the checkpoint, but did not find it at all, then such a soldier was severely punished. Peter Walter sent him to the nearest river, where a rope was tied to his life jacket and, together with all the equipment, including a sleeping bag, he was lowered into the water. Until the end of the exercise, a day or two, this poor fellow was in the water day and night.

That's what it cost to disobey the order. I thought, "God, that's what we should be doing at home."

Of course, if any of the Vympel commanders had been in Beckwith's place, such a conclusion would have been completely unacceptable for him. This would definitely be taken

as a mockery of people. I was told by one of the officers of the unit, who had to "make up" the first training programs for the training of fighters. He proposed a 50-kilometer crossing

in winter. In response, they waved a warning finger in front of his nose: what kind of experiments on living people are these? However, life demanded

such experiments. Otherwise, do not prepare saboteurs. And so it was necessary to put the fighters in a specific

situation: to outline a route on the map, "attach" points and launch groups. At first, the usual army special forces standard, the so-called "four tribes of five keme", was beyond the power of the majority. Here is how one of the officers of the operational combat department of Vympel recalls this: "We chose, I remember, a forest area, limited on all sides by highways.

This makes it easier to find the lost. First, I marked the route on the map, then I walked it myself. "Tied" the points. An hour was given to search for one of them, they searched for two or three hours. In 1984, near Narofominsk, the daily exercise had the task of overcoming the route of 60 kilometers with the crossing of a conditional guarded border. The locals resisted us.

committee members.

I had to go with the best group. Moscow region forests
sugar. Two days passed, it was hard. Two were almost carried, although

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The boys were still well into their thirties. When they "crawled out" to the last frontier, the view was amazing ... So many were convinced for themselves how far they are from perfection ... "

This was the stage of transition from military, front-line life to peace. One of the leaders of "Vympel" described it briefly, but quite clearly: a nightmare! However, over time, everything fell into place. "Written" and

launched training programs. The first such, one-year, ended in 1984. She made me think hard: is Vympel going there?

After all, initially at the top they believed that it was possible to prepare special forces officer. A sort of cinematic version of Rambo.

Newspapers still, in pursuit of a sensation, write excitedly about Vympel as a bunch of super-fighters who can literally do everything: shoot, blow up, kill, go through walls. And they do the above fabulously cleverly, invariably successfully emerge unscathed from the fire and frying pan. Of course, this is fiction and nonsense. However, it must be said that the idea of creating a superfighter still hovered in the early

80s, even among KGB professionals. True, already the first years of Vympel's work refuted this fantastic idea. It became clear that in the life of such a generalist to train and

cannot be brought up.

And then, in my opinion, a completely balanced decision was made: to train special forces soldiers with excellent general physical training with a fairly narrow specialization in 1-2 areas. At the initial stage, these were ~~snipers~~ ^{snipers}, scouts, demolition

Later came the understanding of the need to expand specialization to the traditional professions of the "Vympel"

added mountain training, training of hang gliders, combat swimmers, paratroopers. All this was based on the usual standard program of army special forces. Plus, of course, intelligence training, plus work with the local population, plus the collection of information, plus regional studies and a foreign language.

So what are the "pluses" in comparison with the usual army a lot of special forces recruited.

Well, that's why he is a special forces unit, the main whose task was to work abroad.

According to veterans of the department of planning, preparation and conducting special operations, the optimal program

²⁴

managed to work out by 1985. It was designed for a three-year cycle. A year is intensive training, two more years are improvement. In each program, some basic subjects remained,

but something new was also added. Periodically, once a quarter, exercises were held. In the early years, these were

rather short field trips - from two to three to five days. Later they turned into weeks and unfolded in the territories of several regions, republics, and even countries. One of the first, largest, exercises unfolded on the territory of Belarus. Vympel groups landed on a limited area, went to the area and worked for 5 days. In 1985, the exercises

"Autumn-85" covered the Kalinin and regions. The Moscow Spetsnaz Intelligence Groups were opposed by the local KGB authorities.

In 1987, Vympel worked in the Caucasus. In the late 80s - early 90s, the most important task assigned to the unit was to counter nuclear terrorism. Hence, in the Vympel program, there is a chain of exercises at nuclear facilities, such as Arzamas-16, nuclear icebreakers, power plants, ammunition factories, combat submarines.

.. In general, the Vympel exercises are a special page in the history of the special forces. They differed from army exercises in that they were carried out not in the abstract, but in "contact" with the enemy. This does not mean that Vympel went head-on against NATO special

forces, no. However, this is what a very competent and knowledgeable person writes about the exercises, who, in fact, was the organizer of the "contact". "For 10 years," General Yu. Drozdov notes in his book "Necessary Work," the unit (meaning it was in constant combat

readiness, "Vympel." - Continuously operating with its groups in Afghanistan, in operational-tactical exercises inside countries and abroad. These training political Auth.) operations have helped predict many processes of development in our country. For example, a few years ago, NATO command on its southern flank on

the territory of Greece and Turkey conducted maneuvers "Arch Bay Express", aimed at the republics of Transcaucasia and Bolga

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riyu, allegedly in connection with the favorable situation there for influencing ... I drew attention

to these exercises also because the command of the troops of the southern flank of NATO, according to the scenario of probable hostilities, also provided for the delivery of nuclear strikes ... We countered these NATO maneuvers with our operational

tactical exercises "Chesma", which took place in our and neighboring territories. The results of undercover and operational-tactical observations exceeded our expectations: "Arch Bay Express" left behind traces that made it possible to create a closed film "According to received data" about the Chesma exercises. I will only add to the words of the general: the traces were so obvious that they made it possible for our intelligence to predict the outbreak of civil war in the South.

Very useful teachings. Although their results and conclusions made by Vympel analysts were practically not taken into account by politicians. But this is not the fault of the scouts.

The training base also remained an acute problem for the unit. In the press, they like to emphasize that the Vympelites were trained where the future legendary intelligence officer Nikolai Kuznetsov was once trained. Yes it is. It is possible that in the 30s and 40s there was a good base here, but by the time the detachment was created, little was left of it. In addition, the requirements were completely different.

In a word, "Vympel" survived everything that any newly created military unit is experiencing. True, with even greater problems and difficulties, since it is precisely such a unit that is entrusted with preparing "piece material" of the highest class. But absolutely nothing that is focused on the training of "mass units" is suitable for this. Namely, matbaza, weapons, uniforms, food, and so on...

Vladimir Vasilchenko, the former head of the department of the Vympel division, says: - At first, to be honest, we

did not quite understand what to do. Everything was vague and very secret. Some omissions, reticences, analogies, they say, remember the war, reconnaissance and sabotage groups ... 26

In general, there have been many disputes about our tasks. Literature was practically non-existent. Some tasks were blindly carried over from the forties. And in the yard - the beginning of the 80-X...

Outfit, equipment - antediluvian. Here, for example, army uniforms. Normal. Can it survive in the cold for a week? I didn't try for a week, but I tried for three days. Very difficult. Of course, you won't die, but it's already of little use for the most difficult task.

Then we had fur flight and technical uniforms. Blue robe, high boots. Warm, good, if you walk around the city or take a walk through the forest, breathe fresh air. And how to act in it? I remember I'm wearing a vest and on top of this flight, fur jacket. While we walked twenty-

five kilometers, she got wet and dried on me five times. What can you do with this jacket?

Nutrition. I tried a spetsnaz army dry ration in 1982 during an exercise. Lived on this ration for five days. You will eat, of course, if you "sweep" everything to the crumbs, but it's hard to work. So if this ration is for three to five days, you can endure it, but if for a long time, then it does not fit.

Foreign rations, I confess, have not tried. But it is known that they do not limit their fighters in obtaining meat. And we have -
it is forbidden.

During the exercises, I never walked in army special forces boots. The boots of the first sample held the blow well, but these are kettlebells on the feet. So they bought sneakers themselves, ski boots in winter, sewed covers to the knee, wore woolen tracksuits. In a word, they largely relied on their own strength ... And

indeed, they built the shooting range with their own hands, cut down the forest, put up lifts for targets. True, it was hard to reach the targets: stumps, ditches. But nothing, they got there. Sort of like an obstacle course. They themselves made a language laboratory for studying

foreign languages.

All this is sad. I would like, of course, as in civilized countries - a shooting range equipped with the latest technology, language rooms with the latest science. But as it was, so it was.

The same was true for wages. me for some reason
naively it seemed that a fighter of a special subsection

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niya should receive no less than, for example, an employee of the First Main Directorate. Alas, as the former commander of Vympel, Rear Admiral Vladimir Alexandrovich Khmelev, told me, only in the 90s was the allowance of his wards raised to the average level of PGU. Nevertheless, the unit lived, trained, and improved. Against all odds. A strong and efficient

team was formed. Meeting with yesterday's Vympel fighters, who managed to find themselves in today's powerful life, I never cease to be surprised: the intellectual and combat potential was gathered into a single fist! What a unique unit was nurtured.

FOREST PEOPLE

On that day, grandfather Mihai was in for a terrible shock. In his native forest, in which he grew up and grew old, in the middle of nowhere, twenty miles from the nearest village, where

never lived a single living soul, except for himself, but the grandfather met the faithful dog ... He even found it difficult to firmly determine for himself whom he met. At first, the old partisan imagined that

he was approached by ... the Germans. Yes, yes, the Nazis, those same punishers. True, after a minute or two, the grandfather realized that he had blundered with a fright: what kind of punishers, in the yard, thank God, the eighty-fifth, and not the forty-second. Grandfather Mihai took a closer look, on caps like a star, a vest on

his chest. But bearded, in a spotted, incomprehensible form and with machine guns to overweight. And when the one in front asked: "What are you doing here, grandfather?", And the other one came in from behind and cut off the escape routes, Mihai understood: this is a gang. The faithful dog, who was not even afraid of the wolf, rushed to his feet, clung to

his boots. The gun almost fell out of his hands. Mihai said goodbye to life: they would kill him, why would they need a witness. However, the "bandits" did not kill. We talked to him

about something.

In the first minutes, grandfather could not understand: what are they mumbling about? He seems to hear the words, but he cannot understand. They're talking about a gang. Hardened criminals fled from the camp, and these, with machine guns, seem to be looking for them. 28

Mikhay was silent, like dumb, and when he was asked if he had seen the bandits, his grandfather barely squeezed out, not examining his own voice: "U-oo-oo ... a". " This is where it all ended.

People with machine guns disappeared as they appeared, and grandfather rushed home. He remembered one thing, clearly and firmly: not a word to anyone about what

he saw in the forest. I don't know if grandfather Mihai told anyone about the unusual meeting or is still silent, but Vympel often recalls this incident with a smile. The forest people who frightened grandfather were, of course, they, the fighters of the reconnaissance and sabotage unit.

The nineties picked up the pace. Teachings rolled one after another. Here is how Valery Kiselev, a former Vympel employee, recalls those times:

- The exercises went in a stripe. The group is thrown out, we cross the conditional border line. We move only at night, for several days. Behind them are hundreds of kilometers. We walk along untrodden paths, where there is not a soul, not a single person. For any person is our enemy.

We move in azimuth, we go to the point. We find the cargo and with it on the way back. There were

other teachings. State border line. She is guarded paratroopers. We have to infiltrate and get out into the area.

Or, from Tula - moving to Moscow on foot, of course with carrying out sabotage activities.

Teachings, teachings... In winter, autumn, spring. We are swamp people.

Now, over the years, looking back, the commanders and fighters of Vympel assess differently that "swamp" period of their

life. Some feel that action from the forest's vantage point has received undue attention. The main argument in this dispute: "Vympel" was preparing as a reconnaissance and sabotage unit to work abroad. Are there many such impenetrable forests, like ours, in Europe? No,

Certainly.

However, it is easy to talk and argue about it today, but a decade and a half ago everything was different. In essence, those who created Vympel started from scratch. Somewhere far away, in history, the experience of OMSBON remained. But you don't get much from it.

Although, it seems to me, the "forest direction" in the preparation of "Vympel" in the early years is explained precisely by the presence of rich experience in sabotage activities of partisans in the years

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war. This experience was always at hand - in the methodological and special literature. Yes, and some direct participants in the partisan movement were still in good health and passed on the experience of the youth.

True, behind the backs of many Vympel fighters was already Afghanistan and the awareness of the need to master mountain training.

These years also saw the first trips of the future "mountaineers" of Vympel to Kirovakan, to the mountaineering army center. So it is quite legitimate to consider: in parallel with the forest and swamps, the development of the mountains went on.

However, the main attention was still paid to working out the actions of reconnaissance and sabotage groups in the forest. Indeed, by and large, it is difficult to imagine a saboteur who does not know how to "work" in the forest. The forest provides invaluable experience applicable in various situations.

Imagine for a moment: the group, as it was during the exercises in the Kalinin region in 1984, was tasked with preparing a base for receiving a sabotage unit of about a hundred bayonets. For an uninitiated person, such a task sounds very casual - the base is the base. But what does the secret base deep in the forest mean? And this means that an underground dugout should be built, or in the professional language of scouts "cache", in which sabotage groups can live, prepare and

go on a mission. The main requirement for him is secrecy. An outsider will pass a meter from the "cache" and will not notice. But how to do it in reality? What to do with dozens of cubes of excavated earth and how to mask it? Where to get wood for construction, because it is clear that it is impossible to cut it nearby? How to make entry and exit invisible? How to arrange a pipe so that smoke is not visible?

Hundreds of questions, thousands of nuances, on which the life and performance of the task by the entire unit will depend. A kind of higher mathematics of sabotage work.

Where did this higher mathematics begin? From the choice of the location of the "cache". Tried to dig pits to

determine the composition of the soil, its water content. However, nothing happened. The soil is swampy, the pits instantly filled with water, you had to rely only on the map, but on your own

experience.

thirty

Soon a place was chosen. It turned out to be very successful. Several old but overgrown clearings passed nearby, a decrease in relief and two streams from different sides. According to all the

canons of sabotage science, the forest had to be cut as far as possible from the construction site of the underground dugout. However, cutting is just the beginning. The felled tree should not only be delivered to the future "cache", but also uproot the stump, disguise the place where the pine or spruce used to stand.

Logs are considerable: five or six meters long. And yes, you have to walk along the same path. And what does two dozen people stomp on the same path mean? A few days later the path was trodden knee-deep. And, by the way, it should be disguised. As for the location of the "cache", the Vympel fighters carefully removed

the top layer of soil along with the trees and moved them to the side, for the time being. When the work was completed, the fir trees were returned to their original places. Heavy, wet, clayey soil was dragged on raincoat tents, since the stretchers, prepared in advance, failed the very next day.

There were also innovators: parachute straps were thrown around the neck, tied to the handles of an improvised raincoat-tent stretcher and off they went. And the path is not close. The soil was dragged about a kilometer away, dumped into a forest river.

However, a problem soon arose there. The soil turned into an artificial dam and blocked the river. The lake spilled. I had to make another dam and mask them. They dragged boulders, old logs ... One group dug, dragged soil, the other prepared camouflage.

In general, disguise brought a lot of trouble. It would seem an elementary thing - cut branches of trees. In the usual position - made a fire and the problem is solved. Here, everything is different. It is impossible to burn fires during the day - the smoke is visible for many kilometers - they burned at night. But at night you can see the fire of a fire. I

had to put on a coat
tents and make fires.

When they took out the pound, they made a berm of the walls, rolled onto the floor, onto the roof. They laid a film, compacted a layer of clay, covered it with sand and only then with earth. About a hundred trees were planted in a layer of earth, the site was disguised. 31

They removed the main and emergency exits. They suffered for a long time how to make and disguise a cover over the exit. Done. Sod and branches were strengthened on the lid.

The emergency exit was taken down the slope, into the spruce forest. Even

a spare well will be found, the main one is out of danger.

Prepared "Vympelovtsy" and a false "cache". They dug a well, it seems that work was carried out here, as they say, they slightly inherited it. They trodden the path, especially without masking. A false "cache" was arranged in isolation from the

main base and carried it a kilometer and a half - two ahead.

In a word, by the appointed time, all underground and surface work was completed. A strict inspection

was to be carried out by the head of Department "C" himself, General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov. A direct participant in the exercises, one of the builders of the

underground dugout, Pavel Kochkin, tells how it went: - We "plowed" for two weeks. I remember today and think that everything that has been done is beyond human strength.

If this is transferred to the present time, no one will understand what they plowed for? It had to be done. They did not think about money, about salary. Mosquitoes, cold. Washed in

puddle. But they did the job.

The meeting place with the inspector was agreed by radiogram, the exact coordinates were indicated. Drozdov also took with him our committee "filmmakers". In general, the "filmmakers" broke first. We met the management, brought.

The first thing they asked: "Where is the cache?" Yes, it's in this area. Yeah, with an experienced eye everything is captured - here is the cover. They wanted to open, we stopped: no need. Why? They took a rope, tied

it to the lid, pulled it, and there we explosives, signal mines. They set up fireworks.

Well, not bad. Where is the main cache? They led. Here the authorities were surprised: where are the trails? There are no traces.

They brought. They say you don't need to show it, we'll find it ourselves. A support group of our guys joined. We passed the base twice, as reported by our observer on the radio. They showed: here is an observer, twice you could get under control and be destroyed, and the group in the dugout was warned. 32

OK. They keep fumbling. There are a lot of people. Climbed all around. Surrendered. They

showed me the lid. The authorities say, so what, if we throw a grenade now, everyone in the "cache" will be finished. Throw it, but if you want, let's go, first we'll have a look.

We went downstairs, and there was an anti-grenade shield and a door. Not bad.

We also appreciated the interior decoration of the dugout. They ask: how will the departure of your group be organized? And then there is the task. It is set very strictly: everyone must enter through the main entrance and leave.

So we did. They went in, closed the hatch, the door, and went back into the spruce forest. We report on the radio, they say, no one

no, come on in. They went down, found the "spare tire" and followed us. We walked a little and hit the wall. We made turns in case of persecution so that the directory would not be shot through. Well, the inspectors figured it out, went out into the lowlands, into the spruce forest. They looked: from the spare the main entrance is not visible. Competently worked out, all conditions of departure are met. The question arose, where did the land go? I had to show our artificial

dams. On that, in fact, the exercises ended. We were awarded with diplomas of the Chairman of the KGB.

These were very revealing, memorable teachings, but far from isolated. Just one of the few. It happened when they "took" air defense garrisons. They came unnoticed, they left unnoticed. Once, however, they decided to take the lamp away from the control room, as evidence of their stay.

The control room turned out to be operational, on combat duty, and the lamp was very expensive, gilded. These gold lamps were guarded like the apple of an eye by sentries with live ammunition. By the way, no one warned them. So, upon detection, there was a direct threat to both life and health. But this is upon discovery. This, fortunately, did not happen.

What was it then? After all, it was possible to pull out a cubic meter less earth, to dig a meter smaller? No you can not. It was impossible to think of such a thing at that time. For without high words - they did not do it for themselves, they did it for the Motherland, for the Fatherland. And they did it for real. 33

"UNIDAT-88"

This news literally shocked the State Security Committee of Latvia. In the evening, on the way home, unknown people attacked a colonel, the head of one of the leading services of the KGB of the republic. The attackers disappeared along with the captured.

All this did not happen in these troubled times. Although even today the loss of a state security officer of this rank would be a major failure. What can we say about the years when the KGB was an all-powerful and powerful state within a state.

However, within a day everything fell into place. The colonel was returned. At the analysis of the exercises, the deputy head of the Vympel unit, Evgeny Savintsev, apologized to the recent "hostage". Being a professional, he was not offended, despite the experienced unpleasant moments. He was kidnapped with the sanction of high committee chiefs.

Of course, the colonel did not suspect that he was in the center of the exercises of the Vympel detachment. So it came out quite naturally. And the capture, and the most active opposition of the local employees of the committee, and their net loss in all articles.

"Vympel" once again gave several lessons to colleagues. The successful operation to capture the most valuable secret carrier proved that the Vympelites gained experience. One of the stages of this acquisition was the teachings code-named

"Unidat-88". I would

like to tell about these unique teachings in the language of documents, rare and obtained with great difficulty. Let not always bright and catchy, but reflecting the deepest essence of what happened. So, the Vympel unit was brought into the situation. "A coup d'état has been carried out in one of the countries

friendly to the Soviet Union. In fact, the legitimate government was liquidated, and its remnants went underground.

The president has been arrested and is under guard. The leader's whereabouts became known to his underground supporters. They turned to their allies for help in carrying out an operation to free the president."

The operational combat group "Unidat", which included 7 fighters of the "Vympel" group and 10 employees of the Cuban special forces, received a combat order:

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" In the period with the By plan "Alta" to conduct an operation for
By the leader. IN these purposes to the personnel of the group
it was necessary to cross the sea border, land on the coast of the base in D-1, hold a meeting on
with the "Doctor". In the developed plan. For V square 32235.

former leader of the underground
proceed further By

diversion of enemy forces to carry out sabotage of the naval facility "Rotonda" on
V square 54191".

In the course of preparation, options for the upcoming basing, movement across enemy territory and landing were played. Operational documents were worked out on the actions of the fighters of the group in the city, at the offshore facility "Rotonda" and the mountain "Alta". special Employees

paid attention selection of
individual and special weapons, mines and explosives. Each of them realized that the success of reconnaissance and combat activities would largely depend on sea and mountain equipment, improvised and technical means. They were also prepared with great care.

An extremely responsible task was assigned to the radio operator. His duties included ensuring reliable and stable communication with the Center, as well as within the group, the fighters of which had to work at a distance of up to 200 kilometers from each other.

Cuban staff also received additional training. Given their combat experience, they formed the core for special events. It took several days to acclimatize and get familiar with the situation. And so the joint Soviet-Cuban operational combat

group "Unidat" began to carry out the task. The fighters carried out covert concentration in the planned square on the outskirts of the coastal settlement a few kilometers from the border.

Having completed the necessary preparations for the launch, the scouts, accompanied by guides, plunged onto

motor boats. On them, the group was taken to a fishing boat, which had specially chartered the underground. The vessel is assigned to the shipping company of the enemy. This facilitated the transfer of fighters across the border to the landing area. In addition, the underground workers, who know the maritime situation, provided

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security measures and disguise of employees on the ship, worked out emergency alert signals. The group commander gives additional orders, determines the place of each scout, their tasks in case of danger.

2 hours 07 minutes. The border was crossed an hour ago. A signal comes from the deck: "Danger!" The navigator announces the approach of the customs boat. If a group is found, the crew of the

boat must be destroyed. However, the captain's reputation is impeccable, and besides, he is familiar with customs officials. The check was reduced to a formal inspection of the ship's documents. The danger has passed. And there's still 30 minutes to go. **2 hours 55 minutes.** Using the locator, the target object was found at the given coordinates, the signs on

the shore were identified, a conditional light signal was received on the starboard side. And now the underground boats are at the side of the ship. The group will have to overcome three miles on them and land in the predawn darkness.

Three hundred meters from the shore, combat swimmers descend into the water. Their task is to conduct a thorough reconnaissance of the coast and provide cover for the landing of the group.

Landing and covert transition to the base completed.

The main base for the special purpose group is a private country villa, which contains the underground. It operates under the guise of a sports base for foreign athletes. It guarantees maximum comfort and, most importantly, a minimum of anxiety.

Despite the guarantee of peace, all security measures are taken. The place of residence of the group is equipped in accordance with the requirements for the main base of the special forces unit.

In the evening of the same day, the group commander gave the necessary instructions to scouts.

The main thing to do tomorrow is to meet with leader of the underground under the pseudonym "Doctor".

The meeting with the "Doctor" is to take place at his out-of-town safe house in a resort area 50 miles from the capital. 36

At the appointed time, the group leader, accompanied by security guards come to the turnout with the "Doctor's" liaison.

The messenger announces the arrival of the "Doctor", clarifies the situation surrounded by a safe house. Combat

the guards are at their posts.

During the meeting, the "Doctor" introduces the commander to the peculiarities of the political and operational situation in the country, and tells in detail about the place where the leader was kept in the mountains. He reports on providing the group

with vehicles, including a mountain rescue helicopter. And, most importantly, it says that shortly before the arrival of the scouts, another option for the release of the leader appeared. Underground workers studied a certain Fernandez, a valuable secret carrier close to the leaders of the junta.

In the event of his capture, it is possible to force the enemy to exchange Fernandez for the former president of the country. To implement this option, a reliable agent from the environment of the secret carrier is transferred to the group for communication.

Returning to the base and evaluating the information received, the commander considered it possible to accept the "Doctor" option. However, it was decided not to stop preparing for Operation Alta in the mountains. The commander informed the Center about his decision.

On the same day, the Center received a radiogram.

"Vetrov. The tasks of the first stage have been completed. offers the person ○ From capturing a secret carrier with we are interested in. I consider

this option acceptable. At the same time, the Rotunda. And proceeding to preparing for Operation Alta Somov.

In a response telegram, the Center agreed to the proposed course of action. In the evening, at the

base, the commander worked with senior urban and mountain subgroups. Methods for fulfilling

the assigned tasks were discussed, issues of maintaining radio contact with the mountaineers, a legend was worked out, and equipment was checked in case the situation worsened. The "urban" subgroup determined the procedure for developing an operation to capture the secret carrier. Into the task of fighting

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tsov-"miners" included carrying out reconnaissance of the area and the selection of helipads, reconnaissance of the place where the leader was kept. "City" was to establish

the secret carrier with the help of an underground agent and organize its "development" with the aim of subsequent capture. Based on the information received from the Center, as well as on the data provided

by the "Doctor" on the state of the operational situation in the capital of the host country, the scouts studied the city, selected test routes, and developed the conditions for conducting a communications operation. A large and laborious preparatory work was required to organize an appearance with the Doctor's agent.

At 19:15 the agent went to the turnout. Combat guards control the operational situation. The leader of the group gives

signal to the scout to carry out the operation.

For a conversation with the agent, a cafe was selected in advance, where you can calmly discuss the problem of capturing the secret carrier. While the conversation was going on, the combat guard carefully controlled the operational situation around the cafe.

The agent gave the scout valuable information about the place of residence and work of the secret carrier, his lifestyle - routes of movement around the city, security. Most importantly, Fernandez turned out to have a mistress whom he secretly met in her apartment. The agent was given the task to collect the most complete information about the secret carrier and his woman. He must hand over the prepared materials at an instant

meeting with a member of the group. On the same day, at the base, combat swimmers were preparing for

fulfillment of the task according to the plan "Rotonda". In two days, it is necessary to carry out them reconnaissance of the object, to determine the places vulnerable to sabotage. The work ahead is big and difficult: to swim three miles from the coast to the object and back. In turn, the "urban subgroup" established the exact

Fernandez's residence, and he was put under surveillance.

Soon data were received on it. The secret bearer turned out to be a doctor of law, head of the special department of the office of the Ministry of the Interior.

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It was possible to establish that in the morning hours he makes the same route from home to the duty station. There were no cases of deviation from the route.

The scouts carried out a thorough timing of the route, obtained data that significantly determined the option of capturing the secret carrier. The "mountain" subgroup safely arrived at the tourist base, settled in strict accordance with the

legend, and began to complete the task. As expected, the reconnaissance of the area and the reconnaissance of the Alta object required good mountaineering skills from the scouts.

The underground agent called a member of the group for an instant meeting with a prearranged signal. On the test route, the scout who went on the

operation was subjected to counter-surveillance from closed posts. No suspicious items were identified. At the appointed time, the agent went to the appointed place in one of the city's clinics. The transferred container contains detailed information

about the connection, its address, time and frequency of meetings, and other information of operational interest.

...Three miles behind. A group of combat swimmers, under cover of darkness, is approaching the Rotonda. The object is apparently uninhabited.

This is the result of a well-thought-out camouflage by the enemy. You should be extremely careful. Based on information from the Center, intelligence officers

it is necessary to accurately determine the most vulnerable places in terms of sabotage, their accessibility, as well as the method of committing sabotage and the amount of explosive necessary for the complete destruction of the object. Today is Thursday. It is on this day that Fernandez visits

his mistress. Here he is, in front of his security guard-driver, entering a state institution. And the emergency exit and the courtyard allow him to quietly leave the building. From here, through the streets, just a few minutes to the house of the beloved woman. It is here that the capture of the secret carrier is possible. He made sure no one saw him. He will return to the car only after one and a half to two hours.

There is enough time to withdraw the group from the area of the operation. However, such an opportunity will not present itself until next Thursday.

Summarizing and analyzing all

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available information about the secret carrier, the group's leadership settled on the option of capturing Fernandez on the route of driving in a car to the place of work. Careful preparations began for the

operation, which received the code name "Serpentine". This stretch of mountain road leading to Fernandez's office,

was identified as the site of capture.

The second option was considered as a spare. Operation by its implementation had the code name "Wicket".

So, Operation Serpentine. Its essence: blocking the car of the secret carrier on a sharp turn by two cars of the group - the upper and lower. Three observation posts announce its appearance, they also provide combat cover. The time to stop the car and capture the object should not exceed 20 seconds. **7 hours 50 minutes.** The group's vehicles take their starting positions. All scouts in their places.

The operation is led by the deputy commander of the group.

7 hours 56 minutes. Post number 1 reported the appearance of the car Fernandez in the area of operation.

Post #2 reports: "The object is approaching a turn." Now the main task of the group is to leave the area of the operation as quickly as possible. It is possible that some outsider could have witnessed the capture, so security measures have been taken.

Then the "object" is transported by another car. After a while, the traffic police discover Fernandez's burnt and wrecked car in the mountains. Flights of hang gliders in the vicinity of the capital are a common

phenomenon, therefore the option of further transportation of the secret carrier by hang glider proposed by the "Doctor" was accepted, as it made it possible for the group to leave the city unnoticed. It also made it difficult to organize pursuit by the enemy and disoriented the secret carrier in

in the event of an attempt to determine the place of its future content.

After being delivered to the base, Fernandez was interrogated. Confirming

his personality, he expressed a desire to assist in organizing negotiations with the junta on his exchange for the leader. The commander informed the Doctor about the result of the operation. At the next

communication session, the senior "mountain" subgroup

reported that circle 40 was being conducted behind the place where the leader was being held

24-hour observation, a reserve base and helipads have been determined, everything is ready to receive the rest of the group.

The next day, an emergency signal was received - a call for a cache operation. The situation in the city deteriorated noticeably. Some streets are blocked, the number of patrol cars has increased. Of course, this is a reaction to the kidnapping of the secret carrier.

The agent of the underground at the appointed time informed about the laying of a container with information in

the cache. Given the tense situation in the city, the most serious attention was paid to the security of the operation.

The information contained disappointing information. "Doctor" reported on the junta's refusal to exchange hostages. At the same time, he noted the conviction of the leadership of the junta in the reliability of the secrets of the place where the leader was kept. Otherwise, in their opinion, the underground would not have gone to capture the secret

carrier. On the same day, the main part of the group went to the mountains. The commander informed the Center about the further actions of the scouts.

"Vetrov. Operation By the capture of the secret carrier was carried out. Data on the decoding of the group. The junta refused the proposals. I the exchange consider further development of the objects "Alta" "Rotonda" possible. And

Somov.

The arrival of new people at the international tourist base did not arouse suspicion. After placing the personnel, the commander and his deputy, having given the necessary orders to the scouts to continue monitoring the Alta, heard the report of the senior "mountain" subgroup.

"Gorniki" conducted surveillance in the daytime under the guise of tourists, at night - covertly. As a result, the leader was identified, it was established that four guards were stationed on the second floor in a corner room. Particular attention was paid to the

organization of the leader's guard, its number, armament, daily routine. The information received by the scouts was assessed as sufficient

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naya. However, it was necessary to clarify individual points, and most importantly, to constantly monitor possible changes in the situation. The enemy could take measures to strengthen the leader's security or transfer him to another place. Operation Rotonda was a

complex of complex measures. It was assumed that the reconnaissance of the military carried out at some point in the sabotage What

naval facility will divert significant enemy forces from Operation Alta and disorganize it for a certain time.

The leadership of the group at the time of the sabotage on the Rotunda had developed Operation Alta. Having received a radiogram about the destruction of the object, the fighters began to form an infiltration group.

In accordance with the plan of operation, the group must act simultaneously from three directions. Having reached the starting position, each of the subgroups, at the signal of the commander, begins an attack on its sector.

The first and second attack the room on the 2nd floor, in which the leader is located, the third one eliminates the duty police station on the floor below.

The first subgroup began to operate at exactly 4 o'clock in the morning. At the same time, the second subgroup began to move. The third will have to overcome the most illuminated part of the terrain.

The mobile post of the enemy on the veranda of the 2nd floor was a serious obstacle in the way of the first subgroup. I had to silently remove the sentry. Now everything is calm. The scouts

keep moving
intended directions.

Despite the late hour, the enemy guards the leader vigilantly. One of the guards went downstairs to the police station.

The scouts informed the commander that they were ready to attack.
The second subgroup operates in the field of view of the commander.

The starting position for the attack of the third subgroup is the door of the police station. The fighters also informed the commander of their readiness by channel radio signal. Everything is in its place. The

attack signal sounds: "Alta!", "Alta!" The operation was carried out in a very short time. She passed successfully. All subgroups acted in concert. Scouts make a two-kilometer transition in the mountains to a helipad, pre-selected and equipped.

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The helicopter landed at exactly the appointed time. On it, the leader and the fighters were transferred to the reserve base area. A cipher telegram went to the center:

"Vetrov. I report ^O completion of Operation Alta and Rotunda. ^{And} It has. Planning
Loss group to carry ^{Not} to cross the border
out the sea channel.
Somov.

On the same day, with the assistance of the underground, the group secretly crossed the sea border, and then arrived in a submarine at the port of destination.

BETTER MOUNTAINS CAN ONLY BE MOUNTAINS...

"Unidat-88", "Caucasus", "Chesma" and other unique exercises became possible thanks to the acquisition by the Vympel fighters of high skill, combat coherence and individual

specializations.

Yes, in Vympel, without exception, everyone jumped with a parachute, worked as combat swimmers, and were trained in mountainous conditions. However, this does not mean that every employee was equally strong in all disciplines.

It turned out that some simply physiologically could not master mining - here is the fear of heights, and the negative effect of rarefied air. I was told a case when one of the fighters during the ascent had to be tied to a rock on one of the peaks and continue moving. The laws of the mountains are harsh, especially if this is not just a tourist climb, but the performance of a combat mission, when time is running out, the enemy "hangs" on the tail. Something similar became clear during the training of combat swimmers. As you know, they had to land several miles from the

coast, overcome large expanses of water in stormy conditions, and enter the water through the torpedo tube of a submarine. Here it became clear that there are fighters suffering from fear

closed space, and the exit through the torpedo tube,

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as you know, an ordeal even for a well-trained and healthy swimmer. In a word, I would like to emphasize that the Vympel

fighters were ordinary people, with their own shortcomings, capabilities, and abilities. However, a well-designed methodology, enhanced training, during which the strongest in various disciplines were determined, a chain of continuous exercises that tested skills, led to the fact that over the years the unit has grown high-class combat swimmers, climbers, paratroopers, hang gliders.

In recent years, Vympel has successfully mastered ski training and paragliding. Of course, one should immediately

make a reservation that such a tough special selection weeded out all the worst, incapable, leaving the best of the best. Subsequently, a whole department will be formed from them. And really, it's very important. Now the leaders of the unit could be sure that any task their fighters could handle.

In any case, there was someone to go ahead, to pave the way for the rest, performing the most difficult tasks. There was someone to teach the youth, to prepare a replacement for themselves. And that the

so-called 5th department has reached the heights skill, no doubt. There are dozens of examples.

Here is just one of the ascents of the mountain group "Vympel" on Elbrus. Ask any climber what climbing Elbrus is? This is a difficult, dangerous business that only professionals can handle. There are laws of this ascent. On the eve of the climbers climb up to the Pastukhov rocks and descend

back. They go up to the eleventh shelter by cable car and rest there, acclimatize.

Vympel was different. On the morning of the ascent

The cable car didn't work. By all laws, the rise should have been postponed. But the guys decided to go. By lunchtime, they had already reached the eleventh shelter, had a rest, and at three o'clock in the morning moved to the top. They subdued her and went downstairs.

The most venerable climbers were surprised at their pace and endurance, they were proud of the mentor and assistant of the "mountain" group of the unit, the famous Soviet climber, deputy head of the USSR Mountaineering Department Yuri Emelianenko. 44

The same can be said about combat swimmers, when during exercises in a storm they walked several miles to the shore, about paratroopers who landed on the roof of the nuclear unit of a nuclear power plant, planning in the immediate vicinity of the highest voltage wires. A small mistake - and from the glider could remain

just ashes.

These successes are certainly encouraging. However, let's not forget that it takes years and years to train specialists of this class. Today, Vympel veterans agree that the training period should be calculated in 7-10 years. Of course, with a well-established program, the availability of an appropriate material base, and much more, without which it is impossible to educate a fighter of a special forces unit.

Well, let's start from the beginning, let's start from the mountains. Why from the mountains? I believe that only mountain peaks can test a person comprehensively. Remember, Vysotsky: "Here he is in conjunction with you alone, there you will understand who he is." And checking a special forces soldier, as you know, is the first thing. The

second reason that made me look at mountain training differently than before is Afghanistan. If the fighters of "Zenith", "Cascade" had quite good training in operational and combat terms, then the "mountainers" of them were, frankly, weak. And where does the mountaineering skill come from at the "opera" from Orel, Bryansk or from the Far East? The experience of fighting in the Caucasus during the war years was rather forgotten. The advanced training courses for officers, where the employees of the territorial bodies improved their "qualification", focused on training on the plains, on actions in the forest, and they had to fight in the mountains. But in the mountains, everything is different: "Here you are not a plain, here the climate is different," sang the beloved bard. And he was right. Movement, orientation, shooting, reconnaissance are conducted

completely according to other laws than, for example, in the steppe, forest.

There was another important circumstance in favor of the creation of mining specialization: when studying the special forces of the leading countries of the world, "Vympelovtsy". everywhere they found mountaineering training among the main subjects.

Subsequently, the ability to storm the mountains will help the fighters in taking buildings, houses, structures, and other objects when releasing hostages taken by terrorists from them.

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In a word, awareness of the need for mountain training

"Vympel" came both to the "lower classes" and to the "tops" of the unit. Says one of the leading climbers of the unit

Major Svyatoslav Omelchenko:

Mountaineering is a comprehensive and most severe test of a person. There is no need to create any artificial conditions for testing a special forces soldier, just take him to the mountains. More extreme conditions cannot be created. I can say that some of us in difficult areas moved only on all fours. He looks down, the height is huge, and falls to all fours. Some had to be left on the route under supervision and move on. If civilian climbers turn back at difficult moments, then this is not given to us. We could not return - there is a combat mission ahead that must be completed.

Thus, we take a young fighter and "launch" it into our program. We start with the organization of the day, cooking. Exit to the route - you go for hours. Landing training, for example, is also difficult. But there he concentrated, overcame himself at that moment and jumped. Climbers have a completely different thing, you look at how he goes: does he whine, what is the approach to insurance, even how he hammers a hook, on which, perhaps, the life of a comrade depends. And if I fall, will he jump to the other side to hold me? Yes, and will it hold, because sometimes the hands burn with fire from the ropes?

And they started with ordinary trips to the mountainous regions. The first such trip is Kirovakan, Armenia. There was an army climbing training center. The classes were conducted by instructors. At the end - tactical-special classes.

The second point is Alma-Ata, Pamir. The mountains are already different, more complex.

However, Vympel soon realized that such a training system was not suitable. Let the employees work under the legend, but even the training tasks had to be performed specific, reconnaissance and sabotage, and the climbing instructors were civilians. And the extra "flare" of the fighters of the top secret KGB unit was useless. We decided to select our people, bring them to the second category

on mountaineering, and then prepare instructors from them 46

ditch. Such a group was formed, the fighters soon received the appropriate ranks, took instructor courses and even became rescue climbers. They were entered into the card index of the rescue detachment of the Soviet Union. By the way, the Vympel mountain group repeatedly had to participate in rescue operations.

While the mountain group was improving its skills, mountaineering training continued in the unit. By the time the instructors were ready for advanced training, almost all Vympel personnel had been to

mountains, took, so to speak, his first steps to the heights.

Mountain training programs began to be developed. There were their difficulties. And above all in the age barrier.

In general, age in the life and work of special forces is a separate big problem. By the way, the combat effectiveness, the strength of the military

team.

Yes, the preservation and transmission of traditions, the spirit of the unit, respect for veterans are extremely important, but a change of generations is just as necessary. It's like in sports - you need to leave on time, not become a burden, a ballast for the team. But where? We don't think about it in any way. And it turns out that the veteran of the special forces, in essence, has no choice. Or to the last to hold on to your native unit, where you are known, respected, with which the best years are associated, or leave for good. But we should not forget that a special forces veteran is still a fairly young and full of strength person. But, for example, intensive training in the mountains is beyond his power. We have to attract younger people. The training programs for civilian climbers were not suitable for Vypel: too extended, long terms. The first stage of preparation - theory, study of knots, insurance - took place at the base. In the mountains, the pace of learning was accelerated, intense. They tried to conduct training in different regions, because it was difficult to predict where they would have to act tomorrow - in the Caucasus or in the Pamirs. They practiced as wide a

range of skills as possible: movement on rocks and ice, pass transitions, insurance, work with a rope, mountaineering techniques.

Climbing ended. It should be said directly
not everyone reached the top, someone "slack", someone 47

did not perceive the height, some began the so-called "miner", mountain sickness, when the head was spinning, nausea rolled up, and a loss of orientation began. Imagine that such a person in combat conditions gets into a group - he becomes a burden for everyone.

Thus, from ascent to ascent, from teachings to
the mountain group for special purposes was strengthening its teaching.

Life will test this group, and not only
climbing the most difficult mountain peaks.

Today, few people know that in the early 1990s, security forces prevented terrorist explosions at several points in Moscow. According to the handwriting, it was possible to establish the preparation of explosive devices - one group worked. It was supplied with explosives, detonators of industrial production. The places where these substances were produced, where they were delivered and where there was a possibility of their theft, are not so many in the country. All of them should have been checked. The Vypel division worked on several objects at once. A group of "Vypel" climbers got one of

the most difficult sites - tungsten-molybdenum plant, located in the mountains. The task was set very clearly: to find possible ways of leakage of explosives from the plant.

It was late autumn. The group was thrown into the reconnaissance area. The fighters were based near the city, which provided the work of the plant. The operation was carried out in the highest degree of secrecy. The scouts arrived

at the climbing camp and soon left for the mountains. With local instructors and rescuers, we studied one route, but we had to go completely differently.

Having gone down to the city, they began to study the object. Someone walked straight through the gate of the plant, someone climbed up and observed from the nearby mountain spurs.

We studied the route of receipt of explosives. She, it turned out, came from another city. She was delivered by car to the warehouse of the plant. After unloading, she got from the warehouse to the plant.

The possibility of a leak was found immediately on the route. Instead of two vehicles for transporting explosives, one was used, instead of two drivers, one. Components for the preparation of explosives were transported like firewood.

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The car goes slowly, overcoming long rises. The fighters managed to get into the body unnoticed and "kidnap"

bags.

In general, many leakage paths were found along the route, and also during the movement of explosives from the warehouse to the plant.

Employees of Vympel entered the workshop where the components were mixed and explosives were being prepared. Some fighters managed to "get" a job at the plant. The fighters of the group filmed

everything, conditionally mined the factory crusher, pipelines, penetrated into the sedimentation tanks and prepared them for detonation. The conclusion was far from comforting for the local territorial

authorities: it is quite possible for explosives to leak from this molybdenum plant. This is a brief history of the birth, preparation and ascent to the heights of mastery of the mountain group for special purposes.

However, "Vympel" was strong not only climbers. No less interesting and fascinating is the fate of combat swimmers - a very exotic profession in the conditions of a seemingly purely land unit. But they are discussed in the next chapter.

CALL SIGN: "SEA!"

The huge mouth of the sea ferry, in which the railway the car looked like a toy, opened up to meet the waves.

It was midnight. October. The sea was stormy. The wind whistled in the ferry's gigantic open ramps. In the reflection of the ship's lanterns, four stood at the edge of the side. Three in

diving masks, wetsuits, fins, the fourth - in an ordinary sports jacket.

People are like tiny gnomes in the jaws of a terrible monster. Apparently, the first three were preparing to jump overboard into the raging sea. From the outside looking in,

something strange was happening. That night, the "wind rose" turned to the swimmers with its thorns. Air flowed from the shore to the sea. By all professional canons of combat swimmers, these three were madmen, or vice versa - insanely brave people. They were going to move against the wind and against the current. 49

The very first law of combat swimmers says: never against the wind, never against the current. You can kill yourself and fail the operation.

And what about these three - they were not afraid of death and failure? No, they just didn't think about it.

The ferry was heading from Odessa to Varna. The captain knew that there were not quite ordinary passengers on board. Throughout the entire course of the ship's movement, the door of their cabin was locked, its inhabitants never showed up either on deck or in the buffet.

The captain has been at sea for many years. I saw him in different ways: both affectionate and angry, stormy, like today, and therefore knew the value of courage.

However, this was the first time in his memory that this had happened. From time to time, he knocked on the locked door of the cabin with a prearranged signal, brought food to the swimmers. And when the commander of the group of swimmers became worried about the stormy sea, he calmed him down. He even agreed to leave the fairway, to come closer to the shore. And yet the shore, lost somewhere in the night, was almost five miles away.

And now the three swimmers and the releaser were standing at the side of the ferry. At the appointed moment, the propellers of the engine died down and the autumn sea swallowed up the three daredevils.

For another moment, the releaser saw their tiny figures on the wave, but soon they disappeared into the darkness. Pinched the heart. Today he risked not only shoulder straps, his own reputation, but, if something happened, his own freedom.

What risk did his guys take? First of all, life. Two of them were very strong swimmers. One, let's call him, for example, Ivan, surprised the "diving doctor" of the intelligence center a lot. According to all medical tests, he reached the level of an international master of sports. Although they never were. And Vanya's heart worked like a world champion in skating.

The other - the commander and leader of the group, was unusually hardy and fearless. The third was inferior in swimming training, but physically he turned out to be strong and strong.

So they went against the wind and current. The task is to reach the designated point on the Varna coast. But where is she, this point, and where is the shore? Night. Sea.

Storm. Communication with a small group was not expected. The coastline was tracked by lifted

the alarm of the border guards. 50

The swimmers worked, worked, tied with one rope. Ivan dragged a bag with their things behind him. Occasionally the trio stopped, rested, drank water. And again on the road. According to all calculations of swimmers, one hour of work is 3 kilometers. The distant shore has already appeared. This is

where it gets easier. But at the next stop, the leader suddenly noticed: the shore was not approaching, they were being carried away to the sea by the wind and current. Other members of the group saw this as well.

One of them joked then: "Guys, do you have Turkish passports?" And on the road again,

mile after mile. In the reconnaissance mission, which they sorted out bone by bone at the base, then in the cabin of the ferry, it was said: the landmark is a ten-meter mast in a coastal pioneer camp with a red lantern lit from above. Below, in the alignment - the yellow headlights of cars.

However, a miscalculation came out, it was October in the yard, the pioneer camp was closed and the lantern on the mast did not burn. What about yellow headlights? How to find them if the whole coast was in yellow lights. But most importantly, the shore seemed to be nearby. However, this "nearby" resulted in another hour and a half of movement in a stormy sea. When,

indeed, it was a stone's throw to the shore, 600-800 meters, buoys appeared ahead: fishing nets. Fortunately, the alarm turned out to be false, the nets had already been removed and the swimmers approached the shore.

We went to the coastal strip, fatigue piled on. Ivan, on whom the main load fell, caught on a stone and could not overcome it. I had to help.

On the shore, right on the wetsuits, they put on trousers, windbreakers, and lay down in the stones. Soon they saw a car that slowed down by the sea. The leader turned on his radio station and heard the call signs: "Sea! Sea!" They were called. In a few minutes they were already in the arms of their comrades.

5 years have passed since the group went to sea from the ferry hours.

Thus ended the exercise of combat swimmers of the Vympel unit. It was them, of course. Like any new business, the

training of combat swimmers made its way not simply. No, not because routinists have settled in the leadership, rather, on the contrary, the Vympel command contributed to creativity, but the preparation itself is an extremely expensive and legally responsible occupation.

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However, no matter how difficult the special forces fighters got in the way, over time, the realization came: we need specialists who can operate in and under water. An analysis of various types of exercises showed that "submariners" are necessary in 70 percent of cases, especially if the work of the fighters is connected with nuclear and hydroelectric power stations and industrial facilities. In a word, wherever there is water in the technological cycle, the skill of combat swimmers is applicable.

Subsequent practice showed the correctness of the calculations of "Vympel" analysts: where even the smallest rivulet flowed, there is a real possibility of penetration to the object, not to mention the sewerage system, water supply.

Fortunately, there was an underwater enthusiast in the unit. swimming Yury Podlesny.

For starters, before going down under the water, he dismantled three scuba gears, re-read a mountain of books about scuba diving. The first book that fell into his hands was a book by Jacques Cousteau. However, everyone understood: theory is

only the first step in mastering the profession of a combat swimmer. Yury Podlesny, an employee of the

Vympel group, says: - The beginning of the training of combat swimmers in the unit falls on 1982. We came up with proposals for management and we were given the go-ahead to rent a pool. Gathered an initiative group. We started working with a set of "one" - a mask, fins.

We figured out how to stay on the water, how to dive properly so that your ears are in order. How, for example, to surface from a depth of seven meters, while remaining healthy and combat-ready. Then they began to think about the development of

scuba gear. In the Dolphin pool, under water, we remove scuba gear and put them on the bottom. Of course, the apparatus must also be correctly placed so that air does not escape. And we begin work: forty-five minutes we move from apparatus to apparatus without floating to the surface, we work out breathing techniques, other techniques, for example, how to insure each other. As a rule, during these forty-five minutes no one surfaced. Well, except for those cases when the guys just made fun of each other - blocked 52

bottled oxygen. The next one will figure it out, open it, it is necessary to emerge. But it was also a very useful "jokes". They taught to act in extreme situations. Well, those who urgently surfaced, had to be punished

display beer.

We learned to work on media. And this means charging silver-zinc batteries, blowing powders for air regeneration. And all on their own, on an island open to the winds, at a temperature of plus thirty degrees.

It may seem strange, but each of us made parachute jumps into the water. They landed from 200 meters, in full gear, in wetsuits, with weapons, carriers.

Imagine, at a low altitude, an airplane is flying over the water, throws out a combat swimmer and he goes into the water, dissolves.

Particular attention was paid to shooting training, both in the air and under water. By that time, we had submachine guns and pistols at our disposal. I recently read about them in the open press,

and we were armed them already in 1987.

We also studied the underwater world, the habits of fish, marine

animals. Imagine the same well-known "skate". When he lies, he seems to be so beautiful and harmless, and the spikes are 20 centimeters. And inflicts burning, non-healing wounds...

These are the first steps of the combat swimmers of the Vympel group. However, we had to move on. And here new difficulties arose. Training in the Dolphin pool, where the group's employees were initially engaged, for many reasons did not suit the super-secret unit. Even under all sorts of legends. Therefore, it was necessary, as in mountain training, to grow our instructors. And this, by the

way, does not happen so quickly. One of the fighters had four years, on Sundays, at the expense of his personal time, on duty on the side of the pool, and even prepare a children's group of swimmers, before he was given the "crust" of a public instructor.

But, as it turned out later, this "crust" was not very much appreciated among naval specialists. So the enthusiasts of the training of combat swimmers "Vympel" passed, read, everything,

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what was then in their specialty in the Soviet Union - and DOSAAF, and naval special forces, and the Sevastopol school of divers, and even took lessons from Vietnamese divers.

In the course of training and preparation, we accumulated the necessary experience, realized and understood a lot. We understood, for example, that cannot be replaced by you will go around, such things cannot be deceived and physiology. That its not any perseverance and training. That some completely healthy guys can't become combat swimmers. For example, the fear of closed space, which was tested only when leaving the torpedo tube - a very narrow, uncomfortable tube. So, in one of the races of a group of Vympel fighters to the city of

Ochakov, where the legendary unit of 20-man naval saboteurs lodged, four did not pass the torpedo tube. They began to be more careful with large, pumped-up guys. With them, the problem is operational: after leaving the water, it is difficult to

hide them. They can't get out through the torpedo tube - they can't get through. Even such, at first glance, a trifle as the volume of the lungs matters. And a very large volume, it turns out, is not good at all - the oxygen supply per unit of path is consumed faster. Not all

employees could cope with another diving

complexity - in an emergency, a quick descent into the water.

In a word, there was natural selection. Of the one hundred and twenty people who were trained by the "sea devils", 16 swimmers were selected first, then, in the course of further selection, only ten. But they were real "devils" ready to perform any task. "Vympelovtsy" carefully studied the experience of sea swimmers

Germany and Italy during the Great Patriotic War.

So, in Italy, the first combat swimmers appeared in 1935. IN

In 1941, the Italians already had a flotilla of small combat vehicles and a swimmer training school.

After the British battleships Queen Elizabeth and Valient were attacked in the port of Alexandria, a naval saboteur unit was created and

the English.

The Soviet Union was seriously engaged in the preparation of combat swimmers only in 1970, when in the system of the Main

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ductive management, a special sabotage unit was formed.

According to some information, our swimmers participated in "acute events" in the "hot spots" of the planet, and after the explosion of the ships "Captain Vislobokov" and "Captain Chirkov" they were engaged in the protection of ships in the ports of some countries.

In 1989, off the coast of Malta, the Maxim Gorky liner, on which the meeting of the Secretary General of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev and US President George W. Bush, was also guarded by Soviet combat swimmers. And as you can see, very successful.

By the way, Vympel combat swimmers were also trained on the basis of the GRU sabotage unit. So we tried to accumulate various experiences - both our own, home-grown, and foreign.

As a result of the accumulation of this experience, we came to the conclusion that a professional waterman must be able to overcome 10 kilometers with a load of 50

kilograms. Of course, these results were significantly overlapped. An example of this is the teaching with which I began this chapter. However, the most important was, perhaps, not the absolute distance and weight, but, above all, the moral and psychological readiness to land at a given point in the sea and complete the task. Vympel combat swimmers were not afraid of the sea, they worked without insurance with firm confidence in their abilities. An example of this is the numerous classes and

exercises in which they had to participate. Here, and the release of hostages in the coastal strip, and undermining objects at sea, and landing from a submarine, and even the "capture" of a nuclear icebreaker.

It happened to receive for the performance of seemingly educational tasks and military awards. So it was during the exercises in the Caspian Sea, when a group of Vympel combat swimmers was given the task of ensuring the landing of a special agent from the water area to a given territory.

Here is how one of the participants of the exercises told about it:

- We had very cool events by maritime standards. Our group met the ship for three days on the high seas.

It was December, the Caspian Sea was stormy, and the authorities decided that we will go out on an inflatable boat for 100 meters. But

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"hundred meters" is a surf zone, where the wave is unimaginable. I had to insist: we go out to 600 meters. And this is already

far enough. The task, it

must be said, is daunting. Going out to sea in a boat and rendezvousing with a ship is like docking space satellites in orbit. The head of the exercise says: "You give the sailors the coordinates of the

point where you will meet with the ship." Well, I take an ordinary card and report. In the evening, the management almost swears at me: "What did you give us? We must take a sea map. Have taken. And for sailors, depending on the scale, an error in setting the point "plus or minus one millimeter" is allowed. Only we have 1 millimeter on the map - "weave", for example, is equal to 100 meters, and they have 1 mile. At night, in a stormy sea, one mile is a gigantic distance, you can look for each other for a day - you will not find.

Began to think how to be. They invented a method: to build a leading sign - three lanterns one above the other so that the ship could enter this line. But the line is not everything. How to calculate the point itself? We decided to put two more lanterns downstairs. Well, here is mathematics, it is not difficult to calculate the point of your standing. Two days on duty at sea - no one. On the third day, the barrage

time at a given point ended, and with a clear conscience we went to the shore. The sea is raging, the storm is more than 3 points, you can't go ashore. But somehow we managed, went out, took off our wetsuits. Volodya Arbekov went to take off the lights and suddenly came running: "There are signals from the ship. I answered the password. They are waiting for us." Better get dressed. And we have overalls from the NATO bloc, disposable, thin rubber. They bought only four pieces, took care of the eyes more. But here there is no time to shake over overalls, they urgently pulled them into the sea. Forward, and the waves carry back. Then we throw the boat on our hands and swim behind it, taking turns climbing inside. We are just leaving the surf and suddenly the rubber oarlock bursts and the oar flies out. One is, the other is not.

Meanwhile, the boat begins to blow away with the wind. And then one of the guys grabbed an oar and held it with his hands instead of an oarlock.

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The boat is flooded with water, the boat is lost in the waves, and instead of of the planned 600 meters we go into the sea for 2 kilometers.

Here, as luck would have it, the sonar on the boat failed, around the shallows, the captain is afraid to come closer. So I had to row with all my strength.

Okay, they came up, took the agent, and I'm thinking how to land him safely with a wave. But it turned out, almost like in a movie. At the shore, the guys dived into the water to support the boat, and it was abruptly thrown forward, they fell behind, but then I kept it as best I could. In a word, the agent was safely landed. For these exercises, a group of Vympel swimmers received

medals "For Military Merit". It's not just about the awards, of course. Although, to be honest, it's nice to get them. Another thing is more important - five years of preparation (and the exercises took place in 1987) were not in vain.

Skill increased, the unit gained strength.

Fortunately, the department of combat swimmers exists in Vypel to this day. It has both veterans and youth. When the Avrasiya ferry was seized by Chechen terrorists in Turkey and Russian President B.N. Yeltsin announced three hundred officers ready to storm, he had in mind precisely the "Vypelovites". True, the President somewhat exaggerated the number of swimmers, but the fact remains: the "sea devils" were ready to fly to the site of the terrorist attack.

CLUB "THREE SEVENS"

Parachute training in the special forces is one of the main ones. And not only because it always, as it were, lay on the surface, was widely mastered in the country, but also because without mastering it it is impossible to solve the main task of the special forces - the delivery of the unit in a short time to the right point.

By the way, it was the scouts and saboteurs who were the first in history to feel the benefits of using aviation to land their agents behind enemy lines, and subsequently sabotage groups and subunits. Including the method of parachuting.

Before the First World War, as you know, military aviation was used only for bombing and reconnaissance from the air. And so the outbreak of war was a kind of catalyst for action.

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active development of new means of combat, hitherto unseen methods of combat operations. Now, with the

beginning of the war, aircraft, even with all the imperfections of their designs, make deep raids behind enemy lines, land scouts and saboteurs.

The results of the raids were impressive. Whereas before the transfer of an English agent behind enemy lines through Holland required at least two weeks, then thanks to an aircraft sortie, he got to a given area in two hours. And returned in case of luck in a day or two. Thus, intelligence data appeared on the headquarters tables in a fantastically short time.

It was not only the British who understood this. Already a few months after the outbreak of the First World War, the High Command of the French Armed Forces demanded from aviation a volunteer who could land a reconnaissance officer in the rear of the Germans. The fighter pilot Pensar turned out to be such a volunteer. Later, the airlift of scouts and saboteurs occurred quite often. The French called the operation to land

agents or small sabotage groups behind enemy lines a "special task." This term has survived to this day.

So, preparing for the implementation of "special tasks" and the fighters of Vypel were intensively engaged.

Everyone should learn to jump with a parachute. However, in the course of training, the best ones stood out. Of them and

staffed the department of "pilots-paratroopers".

Why "pilots-paratroopers"? Yes, because in the early 90s Vympel professionally mastered not only a parachute, but also a hang glider. Today, no one has any

doubts that a hang glider is a very effective weapon for special forces. The device is able to deliver two people to any point - the pilot himself and the parachutist. And if the rumble of an aircraft is an extremely unmasking means, then the sound of a hang glider engine at a height of a thousand meters is perceived as a light chirp, and at one and a half thousand it is not at all perceptible to the human ear.

Yes, and a hang glider at such a height looks more like a soaring bird than like an aircraft. So there is every opportunity for a hidden, silent exit to

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assigned area and landings. And if, in addition, the saboteurs are equipped with "planning wing" parachutes, the success of such an operation is quite likely.

The experience of the exercises at the Kalinin NPP, where hang gliders and "wing-parachutes" were used to drop the fighters, proved the promise of this method. And this means the correctness of the calculations of those who led the simultaneous development of a hang glider and a parachute.

Says the fighter of the special forces "Vympel" Pavel Pegov (surname changed):

- I came to the unit at the very beginning of 1991. The fighters have been jumping according to the army norm for a long time, in my opinion, five jumps a year. We went to Tula and jumped with the paratroopers.

Later we "began" to the Chekhov flying club. Our department was friendly. As part of the department and the department of "pilots of paratroopers." The sports program of

the parachute was taken as a basis training, but shortened it.

We were trained by top-class instructor Alexander Alexandrovich Parfenov, six-time world champion in parachuting, holder of many records. The program was mastered ahead of schedule, already in the second

summer they moved to a gliding shell, began to learn to walk in groups, work on landing accuracy. In Chekhov, they made fun of us: we carried mountain equipment with us for jumps - rope, carabiners, devices

for descending from buildings. Well, they jumped on the roofs of houses, buildings, hangars. Of course, they practiced landing techniques on the forest, on the water. We learned to work in bad weather - in the rain, in the wind, in low clouds. I remember parachutes

were packed on the runway. The rain is pouring, the dome lies right in the puddle. We proceeded from the fact that hardly anyone on a combat mission tomorrow

will disperse the clouds, order cloudless weather.

So it was with the wind. We understood that with a wind speed of 12-14 meters it was not safe to jump, but we are not athletes, we did not work for pleasure or sporting achievements. And in

you won't look at the rules in battle. In general,
I remember now how we worked, and I am taken aback.
Sometimes both day and night. Under the legend of a certain club "three
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sevens, which they themselves invented, flew with other hang gliders.

We had, perhaps, the best devices at that time, and we started flying early, at dawn. It is quiet, there is no wind, and until 7-8 o'clock we fly in plenty, and at 9 we are already preparing for parachute jumps. They worked first and second shifts until 6-7

pm. And in the evening, after dinner, we again roll out our hang gliders - "kergudu", as we jokingly called them. Finished at ten o'clock. But I also want to relax. And there, just a bar was opened, well, we'll order vodka once or twice, lo and behold, it's starting to get light while talking. What's the dream. Let's hit the coffee and to the hangars, roll out the vehicles and into the sky ...

Yes, they loved the sky. And the sky loved them. When the time came to prove their skills, the "paratrooper pilots" of the Vypel worked truly miracles. During the exercises at the

Kalinin nuclear power plant, they were given an extremely clear task: in military terms, to make a vertical envelopment of the nuclear reactor of a nuclear power plant, which, according to legend, was captured by terrorists.

The day before, local engineers familiarized them with the station. The short digression at times looked like something clearly not real, especially when nuclear specialists clarified: "Here we guys have 30 thousand volts, and here we have only 15 thousand."

For the Vypel paratroopers, this meant that if they missed, their comrades-in-arms would not even collect the ashes for the funeral urn. However, in the special

forces it is not customary to discuss the order, and therefore they thought about how to carry it out. How to bypass these "30 thousand volts", these fields of wires, garlands of insulators...

But no matter how accurately everything was calculated, landing on the roof of a nuclear power plant reactor is a deadly business. Many

things are generally impossible to calculate, to foresee, because much does not depend either on the will, or even on the courage of a parachutist. For example, the air flows on the roof of the reactor are one, on the ground they are completely different. In addition, the roof itself is stepped. One sort of "step" three or four meters high. So miss it, try it... In a word, the jump that three Vypel fighters made from hang gliders and a

helicopter onto the roof of the nuclear power plant was extremely dangerous and extremely difficult. However, they did it and

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covering each other, they penetrated inside the station in order to unexpectedly hit the terrorists from above.

... The exercises were completed successfully. And the sky became even closer and dearer.

BACKPACK OMELCHENKO

"Kulibin" "Vympel" General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov called the soldier of the unit Svyatoslav Omelchenko. And he really lived up to this high rank.

However, the more I got to know the employees of Vympel, the more I became convinced that there were many Kulibins, that is, inquisitive, caring, searching people in the unit. On the one hand, they all supported the cause, on the other hand,

life forced them to search, think, experiment. This American "Delta" was simply allocated 90 thousand dollars to build its own

shooting gallery, which consisted of four buildings, and each room was equipped with a complex system of portable and interchangeable targets. The targets were voiced, imitating terrorists and hostages.

The Vympelites could not even dream of anything like this. I remember I was told how, after returning from Cuba after meetings with Nicaraguans, the unit's employees decided to re-equip the shooting range.

One of the fighters said: "We did everything with our own hands, well, they gave us a couple more soldiers to help us. No plywood, no money, no lifts.

They went, they got it, they bought it. True, the authorities later announced gratitude. But it

is important that the departments began to go to shoot, to study ...

"Well, I think this is familiar to many. Nobody brought anything on a silver platter, that's why "kulibins" were born. There was an urgent need for them. In general, a person who has been on a camping

trip at least once understands how much you need on the road.

Sometimes, a successful vacation depends on the little things. And for a special forces soldier who goes on vacation, as in a war, on a combat mission, life depends on a trifle. Therefore, they do not have trifles.

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Since its inception, Vympel has been supplied with what was in the country - in the army, in the Ministry of Internal Affairs, in the KGB. There were so-called "Abalakovo" backpacks, and they supplied them. Then there were "Ermak", "Senezh", but by and large it turned out to be of little use for long, intense transitions.

In the absence of a better one, they also used this, but, as they say, reluctantly. After all, sometimes not only minutes, but also seconds are important for the special forces. However, try to get the necessary thing out of a huge, tightly packed backpack in a matter of minutes. Yes, if it is still, according to the law of meanness, is at the very bottom. So, you have to disassemble the entire backpack, and then reassemble. What seconds are there ... Vympel fighter Svyatoslav

Omelchenko collected, disassembled ... He did this more than once and thought and thought. In the next campaign, during the exercises, he calculated, wrote down, thinking about how it would be more convenient to place the entire numerous spetsnaz economy - from needles to bulky cans of army stew. And finally, he proposed the

idea of the so-called unloading

vest. It was put on over the head, intercepted by straps: behind - a backpack, in front - on the chest and sides of the pocket.

At the exercises in Zlatoust, the author himself tested his invention. I had to walk through the forests a lot, and everyone was convinced that Omelchenko had created something new, better. Ordered two dozen vests.

However, the exercises also showed the disadvantages of the unloading vest. At the beginning of the journey, the load was distributed on the chest and back, as evenly as possible. But the products were consumed, and the balance was disturbed, the vest pressed down on the neck, hampered the freedom of action.

It became clear: it is suitable, but only for short-term actions.

By this time, Omelchenko entered the Institute of Steel and Alloys, a laboratory headed by Dmitry Konstantinovich Shvaikov. All bulletproof vests in Alfa, Vypel, in the army are the idea of Shvaikov and his subordinates. In a word, theorists and practitioners join forces. Svyatoslav turned out to be a godsend for scientists. They know how

tailor, sew, and he is much more convenient to sew, to what place.

In the course of working with scientists, Omelchenko comes to the conclusion: the vest should not function as a backpack. Vest - separately, backpack - separately. 62

Indeed, three components are important in a campaign: ammunition, clothing, food. And if clothes and food were somehow packed, then the storage and delivery of the "be-ka" was the eternal problem of the special forces. In Afghanistan, they sewed

"bras", pouches, so that at least somehow shove ammo, grenades.

Omelchenko decided to "pull" the ammunition with the help of his signature vest. There was a place for everything - for automatic magazines, a compass, a flask. There was a "pocket" for the radio station, binoculars. Even a folding pocket on the chest for a map is thought out so as not to rub it in your pocket or behind the top of your boot.

If necessary, armored plates could also be fastened to this vest. The joint product was called KBSN - combined body armor for special purposes.

It turned out to be a wonderful product. Depending on the upcoming task, armor protection could be removed or put on. Yes, and the protection is different - armor plates are one thing, lightweight Kevlar is another. In anticipation of a particular battle, you can vary. But its weight. On the road, on the road its decline is very important.

The combined body armor has been tested in Afghanistan and Chechnya, and employees are happy to put it on. We jumped in it with a parachute - landed and already protected, ready for battle. When KBSN was heavily loaded,

Omelchenko used special straps. The vest was thrown behind the back, like a backpack.

By the way, about the backpack. Omelchenko turned all ideas about him upside down. Indeed, since its invention

every backpack was opened traditionally - from above. And this is very inconvenient, creates many difficulties.

Once, while fishing, Svyatoslav thought about why the backpack itself should open from the top. And if...

He dropped his fishing rod and began to draw a diagram in the sand. Thus, a fundamentally new backpack was

born. It is interesting that Omelchenko created it on the basis of strict special forces requirements. What are these requirements?

First of all, the speed of opening the backpack, the convenience of placing the load. This is the main thing. But a backpack is not only a reservoir for storing food and things. He, if necessary

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The bridge should become a watercraft, a device for recreation.

And if a fighter is injured, is it possible to make a stretcher out of him?

Omelchenko answered all these questions with his invention. The introduction of his backpack makes a positive contribution to improving the combat training of special units. Imagine a group of 2-3 people. One of the fighters

fastens a comrade's backpack to his backpack. Yes, the first is harder, but the second employee is fully combat-ready, free to maneuver. And all thanks to the peculiar design of the Omelchenko backpack.

The author of the invention also developed an original suspension system. It allows you to quickly remove the backpack, adjust the load, transfer it from the belt to the shoulders and vice versa. Needless to say, the vest and

backpack turned out to be excellent, but it's a pity that they remained in prototypes. A prototype vest is located at the Institute of Steel and Alloys. It never went into production. In the old days, they did not have time, but now the answer is simple - there is no money. The same story with a unique backpack. True, Omelchenko's

original ideas are not stale. Every now and then he meets some of his "notions" on the pages of magazines. Of course, under other names. As for downy suits, here, fortunately, they managed to do it. They themselves developed a style, went out with a proposal

to the factory, and soon the "down jackets" were ready. The main innovation introduced by the "Kulibins" of "Vympel" is trousers with a zipper. They are put on and taken off without removing the shoes, in a matter of seconds. The unit also has its own branded "Vympel" tent. Individual, for everyone. In general, the Vympel fighters tried to bring their ingenuity into every

business. Take at least the Rollgliss systems. They are now known all over the world even to the most uninitiated.

In hundreds of films, special forces soldiers fly from the roof into the windows on these suspension systems.

The fighters of group "A" were the first to master this system. Under them

the leadership subsequently mastered the skill of owning "rollglisses" and "vypelovtsy". 64

However, Omelchenko would not have been Omelchenko if he had not become interested in the "rollglisses" with which the fighters of the Dzerzhinsky Division of Internal Troops work. The Dzerzhinsky

suspension system itself was simpler. And yet, any rollgliss system purchased abroad had many disadvantages. One of the weakest points is the release system

from the basket in which the fighter is located. In battle, success is decided by moments. He flew into the window and immediately had to act ... But it wasn't there, the commando was tightly grabbed by the suspension belts. It is necessary to bend over, apply a rope to yourself and only then remove the belts. Omelchenko had his own suggestions: suspension straps are sewn into the suit. This allows, if necessary, to quickly join the system, get rid of it and act instantly. Vypelovtsy also thought about how to free their hand - after all, in the current Rollgliss systems, one hand is busy fixing the position. And this creates great inconvenience.

I am sure that if Vypel of the previous composition had been preserved, its own, improved system of rollgliss would already be in operation. It, without a doubt, would have surpassed all foreign analogues. But alas ... As the young "pensioners" of

"Vypel" told me with bitterness, just in time for the tenth anniversary of the unit, they were, in sports language, at the peak of their form. And if Omelchenko made many suggestions for improving

the special forces uniform, body armor, backpack, tent, system "rollgliss", then Valery Kiselev worked with weapons. It would seem that the Makarov pistol is known to any military man to the screw. Here you can't subtract, you won't add, as the

designer did, it will be so. An, no. As Kiselev himself told me, "you can't take a pistol from a warehouse and carry out

special combat mission.

A special forces soldier must "caress" the pistol. Kiselev made 17 improvements to the Makarov pistol. When I heard this

figure, I did not believe it. He himself served in the army for a quarter of a century, held the PM in his hands hundreds of times, shot, disassembled. What improvements, what can you add there. The pistol is perfect. And then at the next meeting, I told Kiselev about this.

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He told me some of his "rational proposals". Indeed, they are, at first glance, not intricate and quite simple. However, this is the same ingenious simplicity that turns a service weapon into a kindly treated friend and a powerful defender.

Another "Kulibin" of "Vypel" can be called Pavel Kochkin, a specialist in communications and radio affairs.

It was from him that, in today's cash-strapped times, fantastic, but such proposals necessary for Vypel to create a bulletproof helmet with a radio station built inside, similar to those that Germany produces for its special forces.

Or make your own topographic mapper. Imagine, in our endless forests, in the steppes, in the desert, a fighter always knows where he is. Therefore, he knows where to go, how to act. Special forces soldiers often have to operate in buildings and structures. Sometimes these buildings are huge, multi-storey, with a large number of rooms. What if it's a serious injury? It is more difficult to find such a wounded man in a large building than in the steppe or in the forest. How to save a person?

For this, the commander has an apparatus. While a person is alive, moving, fighting - one light is on, wounded - another lights up. And the commander knows where his wounded is, he can always provide assistance in a timely manner.

Some of Kochkin's thoughts and suggestions have been implemented. Much remains only in dreams. It is a pity, of course, that today neither Svyatoslav Omelchenko, nor Valery Kiselev, nor Pavel Kochkin are on the lists of the Vypel special forces.

There is only hope that new "kulibins" will appear. But when will that be?

OUR MAN IN HAVANA

Can three saboteurs blow up the bridge if it is guarded by a company of a hundred bayonets? For any more or less sane person, the answer is

very clear: no.

However, professional saboteurs violate seemingly unshakable logical conclusions and answer this question in the affirmative. Yes they can.

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Frankly, when Vypel employee Vitaly Ermakov, returning from a business trip from Cuba and Vietnam, offered to hold demonstration classes - to blow up the bridge, even the most sophisticated doubted success. However, Ermakov stood his ground and the commander of

the Vypel, Rear Admiral Vladimir Alexandrovich Khmelev, gave the green light to conduct a special tactical lesson.

We found a bridge on the Klyazma, which was to "fly up to air". Klyazma from the rains is muddy, dirty, roots, driftwood.

Ermakov brought the best of the unit's combat swimmers: "How, Volodya, do you evaluate?" He just shrugged his hands: "We won't work in such a river." Well, no, as they say, and there is no demand. They put up a powerful guard from their own guys. The leader of the lesson ordered me to look both ways. Yes, and the guys themselves were sorted out by the excitement, well, how is it, they are on the bridge, they see everything, the mouse will not slip through and then suddenly someone will sneak up unnoticed and blow it up.

Not to be that. And so each stood his ground.

If Ermakov had not had Vietnamese experience, he would not have decided on such an experiment. But now, after months of internship, he knew how the Vietnamese bridge that connected Saigon with the whole world had been "banged". Already the "Yankees" took care of him most of all, guarded by unprecedented forces. A sabotage was made by a trio of swimmers. Unbelievable but true. Yermakov brought many interesting

ideas from Vietnam. Well, for example, movement and disguise. What it would seem that the Vietnamese can teach us, forest people. It turns out they can.

Vitaly himself came from the army special forces. He received a solid education and strong training. However, before that I didn't think about what kind of fool could come up with a standard for covert movement for a scout.

If there is a need, the Vietnamese 100 meters will go a week. But most importantly, he will come unnoticed, they will walk next to him, they will walk on him, but he will complete his combat mission. And with us, whether you like it or not, you can not, meet the standard. So what is more important in the end - the fulfillment of a combat mission or the time of the standard? Ermakov's group also brought a lot of interesting things from Cuba, the Vypelites

graduated from the school of field special forces and underwent an internship at a city school. What is very important, here they are from

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worked out a program of special operations in the city. This is how Vitaly Ermakov himself

tells about his internship in Cuba: — Of course, we were interested in the very specifics of the

work. First we were given theory, then there were seminars. We watched themed films. For example, on the topic "Sabotage", they have our Soviet film. Starring Belyavsky. He plays an Odessa artist who mined ships. We discussed this film, laid out, as they say,

by bones.

After the theoretical cycle, we were assigned a task in the city, directly in Havana. There was a specific person, an "object", he moved along the route. Traveled, for example, by car, as usual from work to work. We studied his lifestyle, habits, traffic schedule and really

kidnapped him. The teacher of this school, a true professional, acted as an "object". Their approach

in these matters is somewhat different than ours. There, the teacher is a "playing coach", so that he does

not lose his scent, he is bombarded with a task. He performs and on his return teaches again. So what confronted us was not a fat theoretician, but a high-class practitioner, a participant in the Chilean events.

The requirements for the game are exceptionally high. On the one hand, in order to study the object, we had to appear on the route and at the same time, he should not see us. Notice - we are immediately removed.

Our "vis-a-vis" is an interesting man, many shortcomings

"accumulated". In our opinion, it seems to be not significant, but very painful.

The Cubans have a so-called "tribunal" before each operation. We report the progress of the operation, and they ask tricky questions. Of course, in relation to this place, time, nature of actions. If you're not ready, you can push back. Difficult, but very useful practice.

In general, I want to say that the Cubans, in my opinion, are the most experienced specialists in our field.

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I think that one cannot but agree with Valery Albertovich. I recently read an interesting report in the press: the last of Ernesto Che Guevara's executioners has been killed.

I understand the feelings of the journalist - to finish with the executioners as soon as possible. However, in fairness, it must be said: the killers of Che still walk the earth, although in three decades they have become much less. In any case, those who directly tortured and killed Che died under very strange circumstances. There is no evidence of the involvement of the Cuban secret services in the

massacre of the executioners, but nevertheless, for many years someone tracked down and destroyed them. This "someone" is certainly a patriot of his people. One can argue about the approach to the execution of the sentence, but this is a topic

for a separate discussion. And he's ahead. However, let us return to the Vympel unit and tactical

a special lesson on "undermining" the bridge on the Klyazma River.

I will say right away: the result for the protection was very deplorable. Despite all the vigilance of the sentries, the explosion still thundered under one of the bridge supports. How it happened,

Yermakov told the participants of the exercises

Later.

Three swimmers at the turn of the river, from where they were not visible to the guards of the bridge, entered the water. Lined up at an angle. The saboteur, who was at the point of the corner, moved a small raft in front of him, on which a training mine was mounted. The raft had the so-called zero

buoyancy, that is, it floated under water, below the surface level. From the raft, two ropes diverged to the sides, the ends of which were held by swimmers walking in front. Before the bend of the river, the saboteurs floated on the surface, and when

they entered the visibility zone, they plunged into the water and used the Vietnamese way of swimming. That is, they moved with their feet forward, with a straw in their mouths. This style is now called "Vietnamese" for some reason, but it has been known in Rus'

since ancient times. Russian warriors, overcoming water barriers, used reed tubes for breathing.

In a word, Vympel swimmers also used this ancient experience during a special lesson.

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When approaching the bridge support, the swimmers carefully emerged from the water without a splash, one held the charge, and the other two walked in a circle, winding the ropes around the support. Having done their job, according to the general command, the saboteurs under water went unnoticed from bridge.

The charge exploded exactly at the scheduled time, when the swimmers were already out of the reach of the guards. This is just one example of the successful acquisition of experience, which is necessary should be said that for the fighters of the "cordon" special forces. Although it the professional contacts of Vypmel fighters with colleagues from other countries, unlike the same American Delta, were significantly limited. They went, as a rule, to Cuba, to Vietnam.

At times it seemed to the members of the unit themselves that they were walking in circles. The same Yermakov told me a case when in a Cuban general, head of the special operations department, "under whose roof" the "Vypmelovtsy" were trained, he recognized a guest of their airborne school. Then their special forces platoon showed the Cuban delegation the landing, the action from an ambush. Vitaly reminded the general of this at the final banquet, and they both laughed for a long time. Indeed, it turned out around the circle - the circle was closed. It was like that, and it wasn't like that. Yes, we learned from each other. However, each applied the experience of the

other not thoughtlessly, but in accordance with his own conditions, customs, way of life.

In addition, the Cubans, unlike our fighters, acted a lot abroad, gaining a truly combat experience.

Hence their high ability to shoot. When the "Vypmelovtsy" first came to the Cuban shooting range, they realized that their colleagues were a few steps ahead. They had a fundamentally different approach. In the course of firing, they moved a lot, changed weapons, reloaded. I was surprised by the large number of targets set at different levels. And most importantly, great attention was paid to shooting at night. That's right: what's the point of going to the

shooting gallery during the day, if you have to fight at night. With a bitter smile, the Vypmel fighters recalled their previous shooting: a shooting gallery, a stand, and the main task was to put the bullets in a heap. 70

An internship in Cuba changed all ideas about the ability to shoot, and a meeting with Nicaraguan shooters made me forever leave the vicious methods of the Soviet approach to shooting training. However, more on this in another chapter.

Returning from Cuba and Vietnam, the Vypmelites began to look differently at the problem of camouflage. Face, hands have learned to cover the juice of plants. They took grass, crushed it in a bowl, then added ashes from a fire and no "lipstick", as they show in the movies, to the juice. For, according to the fighters, even the best lipstick gives shine. Vietnamese colleagues also taught how to use their hands skillfully.

"He who walks ahead, number one," the fighters told me, "looks for mines with his hands and stomach and clears them. He must have very sensitive hands, like a surgeon. After all, you can't make a mistake, the road that follows him is the road of life. He marks. In the direction of the enemy, they are black or green, in the opposite direction, that is, in their own direction, they are light. The person who crawls behind must see the marks. The barbed wire cuts silently and we crawl through like snakes. A spotlight is shining, but each of us is just a bump. The requirements for the special group are very high. When attacking, for example, a battalion, the losses of the group are zero, not even a single wounded, the enemy is completely destroyed. And the Vietnamese "cache"! This is generally an amazing art, because the war for many decades has taught the Vietnamese to live underground.

In the history of the struggle of the Vietnamese people, there are cases when partisans arranged a "cache" under the American airfield.

At night they went out and laid mines on the planes. Explosion! Around the bustle, commotion, the Americans rush to pursue the saboteurs, and they are nearby. They live for three or four days, until everything calms down, and go unnoticed.

However, living underground is hard. In Cuba, Vympel employees lived in a "cache" for three days, while the Vietnamese lived for weeks.

There are also city caches. Colleagues taught their Soviet friends how to leave them unnoticed, how to secretly return, how to hide the one who was kidnapped.

Our Cuban and Vietnamese guys still remember

lessons, and therefore we are sure: you can't close yourself within the framework of your own

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natural experience. A commando always has something to learn from a commando.

"DESTROY...TO THE GROUND"

Time is utterly compressed. Recent years have been so fleeting and stormy that it is just right for Russians to count a year as two. For other people, such shocks would be enough for a century, but we are "shaking", read, every year.

Why August 1991 was dramatic. However, it was eclipsed by the October events of 1993, the first bloody Chechen war, the terrible explosions of residential buildings in Moscow and other cities of Russia, the second Chechen ...

How distant the GKChP seem now, the tanks on the streets
Moscow, defenders of the White House.

But you can't go back to those days. They cost our Fatherland too dearly, they are the source of many current troubles and misfortunes, wars and bloodshed. Today we are surprised at the

unprofessionalism of the army,

impotence of the secret services.

Where are the roots of this impotence? Who and how ruined the strongest and most experienced special services in the world of the Soviet Union? Now about

it's not customary to talk about it. The "golden newspaper pens" do not touch this delicate topic, the radio and television keep silent. And only veterans of the intelligence service, sabotage service, anti-terror tirelessly repeat: the problem of Chechnya could have been solved in time by the forces of the special services, without bloodshed.

Imagine what that means. Tens of thousands of our Russian guys would be alive - soldiers and officers, civilians, the criminal regime would be localized, the integrity of Russia would be preserved. This would no doubt be a feat. However, in order to accomplish such a feat, the state must have special services, and the special services must have the strength and desire. Alas, after 1991 nothing like this existed. Rather, it rapidly ceased to exist.

And when the problem of Chechnya rose to its full height, we already there was nothing to curb the criminal Dudayev regime.

Now this case has long been forgotten. And I want to remember him. On the eve of the first Chechen war, they took the capital colonel of the security service. As soon as he crossed the border 72

Chechnya, pulled a hat over his head, tied it, did not have time to come to his senses. Later, the discouraged colonel spoke on television, and I listened to him and thought: this is the funeral of our special services. One case, but it, like a drop of water, reflected the enormous problems of the collapse of the once mighty body of the KGB. This man was already betrayed in Moscow, when he was just about to leave for Chechnya. What could be sadder for our intelligence services than betrayal. Then there will be many such betrayals. More terrible and bloody. When hundreds of our guys died as a result of betrayal. But I'm going back to basics. For these sources are covered by the silt of time.

So how did we get to this life? How did it happen that, having destroyed the KGB and the army, they stuffed the Chechen machine guns with cannon fodder - untrained recruits, boys from the Russian worker-peasant hinterland? Who is ultimately responsible for this? Or, as always,

we have no one to blame? What was going on in the special services after August 1991, when they decided to finish off the "black dog"? I have answers to these questions. However, I want to avoid

subjectivity and therefore give the floor to a professional. Of course, those who were in charge of the special services in those fateful months knew the circumstances of the case in subtleties.

Then the KGB was headed by Bakatin. It just seems to me that the appearance of this person is very far from the appearance of a professional special services. Moreover, he is hated by professional scouts. Bakatin came to reform the KGB without knowing anything about the KGB. And not wanting to know. So, I think he is not suitable for the role of an expert in our story.

But his first deputy, Lieutenant General Anatoly Aleinikov, is a figure that deserves attention. He came as a deputy to Bakatin immediately after the August 1991 events. He did not hide that he sympathized with Yeltsin,

Democrats. However, I did not expect that the destructive spirit of these people would be so great. And although today in committee circles the attitude towards him is ambiguous, Anatoly Avvakumovich resisted the "destructive spirit" as best he could.

Here is how Major General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov writes about these people in his book "Fiction is Excluded": "In September 1991, after the August events, I was summoned for a conversation by the new First Deputy Chairman of the KGB of the USSR, General A.A. Aleinikov. Apparently he wanted to know

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what illegal intelligence is, and determine its fate if it was involved in the putsch.

Anatoly Avvakumovich Aleinikov was known to me as one of the leaders of the regional departments of the KGB, who had experience in counterintelligence work. We talked for a long time. I told him a lot. It seemed to me that both of us understood this state problem well. General Aleinikov, saying goodbye, said that I would have to receive the chairman of the KGB Bakatin and asked me to be within reach. But the call never came. In the heat of zealous destruction, the new chairman was not up to the problems of protecting the state. Not until a thorough study of the past and the prospects for present development. He has already managed to learn everything in two or three days, heap so much that the country will heal its wounds for a long time to come. It is noteworthy that none of the US and German intelligence officers with whom I met approved of his steps, although they immediately took advantage of the fruits of his actions.

Perhaps today, from the height of time, Anatoly Avvakumovich would have corrected something in our conversation. But I quote it verbatim as it was recorded several years ago in hot pursuit. It contains many interesting thoughts and many answers to questions that hurt in our souls even now. - Anatoly Avvakumovich, you came to Bakatin as the first deputy at

a difficult time for the State Security Committee. As soon as the so-called putsch ended, the reform of the KGB began ...

Yes, as a deputy, I "surfaced" from Yeltsin's team. In those days, something had to be done, because Bakatin came with the intention of reforming the KGB. But how? So that not a stone upon a stone leave.

Of course, he is an extraordinary person, an intellectual, but completely uncontrollable. He did not know the case, but he did not take advice either. But any state, whatever it may be, cannot exist without special services. Foaming at the mouth, I argued, including to Yeltsin,

that the Committee should not be dispersed. The employees are not to blame. They served the state, that system ... In general, the plans of the country's leadership were as follows: to

start everything with
clean slate.

But you can't do it from scratch. Incompetent people will come
break the system. But the system worked well, we knew

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the operational situation on the ground, what can happen and where, how to counter it, what preventive measures to take. Now there is nothing. That's why we don't know what

happened in Chechnya. Of course, there were extremes with dissidents. But these are, first of all, political games ...

"It means that there were people in the leadership, especially those infected with the virus of destruction. After all, what you say: "Leave no stone unturned", "start from a blank sheet" - this is madness. This is not about any office, but about the state security system. - Burbulis played a big role in the destruction of organs then. Although

he later became our curator, he was cold.

Yeltsin had to be persuaded. I was at his reception
proved.

The first thing the leaders of that time did was stop
finance the KGB. And without money, who will work?

Bakatin took the following position: the President sent me to reform the KGB, and if you need money, go and ask... Yes, not to me, but to the state secret services. And then I stood in the Ministry of Finance for

weeks with outstretched hands. Give money, give money... It's now here and there they don't get money, but then no one believed that such a thing could happen. But it was. I remember, I borrowed from Volsky for the salary of employees. Thanks

for helping though. So we barely made it to December. - But Yeltsin was the secretary of the regional

committee, the Moscow city committee. He knew

what the KGB was. The party was in charge of the KGB then, right? "He knew, he knew, but his entourage needed an enemy. Burbulis

all the time looking for the enemy. So they "appointed" the main enemy of the

KGB. - Well, how did they imagine it: expel everyone? .. - Yes,

disperse everyone. Recruit new people, new leadership. But that's a bluff.

Such a reform would cost the state billions. In addition, such an organ simply will not be able to work. "Unfortunately, nothing can be created in one day. - There was an opinion that it was possible. I had

to save somehow.

position. Then I suggested splitting up: into FAPSI,

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reconnaissance, border troops. Understood: this is stupidity. But what to do, otherwise everyone would die out like

mammoths. In a word, divided. And again silence, as there was no money, so and no.

Bakatin folded his hands at the end of November, nothing
it turns out, I'm leaving, poking around here yourself.

In December 1991, he again asked for an appointment with Yeltsin. Decided to go the other way. "Boris Nikolaevich, it's impossible, how many political enemies you make. That's strong

system".

Okay, like convinced, sat down at the table. They began to discuss. He says, let's take the experience of Germany and France as a basis. There are special services - within the framework of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. So, if you remember, the Ministry of Security and Internal Affairs (MBVD) headed by Barannikov was born. Care under the Ministry of Internal Affairs was met painfully. And I was reproached. As best he could, he argued: the measure was forced, we would not leave, we would completely perish.

Well, then the Constitutional Court sat. The MBVD was divided again. And Barannikov was left at the Ministry of Security. - And, finally, the most difficult question,

thousands of people are asking it today: was it possible to solve the problem of Chechnya with the help of special services? Of course, if that wild collapse that you talked about had not come? - When Dudayev came to power, Barannikov told me: "Take Chechnya on yourself." I knew this region, and Afghanistan was not in vain, in a word, I left, worked, studied the situation. After a thorough analysis, he wrote a note to the Security Council, Skokov, in which he outlined his proposals.

They were as follows: the first was to force the Dudayevites to hand over all their weapons and take them out of the republic, the second was to block the oil export channels. It's prime oil there. They pumped and exported through our territory to Novorossiysk, Tuapse, loaded into tankers. Even then, in a note, I emphasized: after a while, the

Dudayevites will earn so many petrodollars that it will be difficult to stop them. And, finally, the third thing that was proposed: to organize in

Pyatigorsk powerful FSB control and "throw" on Chechnya

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agency network. As the air needed information about what was happening there. Indeed, from

the local KGB department in Chechnya, practically nothing left.

They listened to me and waved their hand: you are talking some kind of crap. However, I

defended my idea. To all that has been said, I only want to add that the perseverance of General Aleinikov was appreciated. Barannikov and his entourage began to collect dirt on the general, who was too zealous about the elimination of the criminal Dudayev regime. It was later that Aleinikov realized that some people at the top had a considerable interest in

Chechnya, and here, come on, it's him with his persistent initiatives. In a word, Anatoly Avvakumovich crossed the road for someone.

True, there was a discrepancy with compromising evidence: it turned out that Aleinikov, for his considerable service in the KGB, did not amass anything except for his wife, daughter and dog. He didn't have a luxurious dacha or a foreign car, and he didn't go on trips abroad at the expense of the treasury. And yet, the slander continued.

Then he came to the chief, put a report on the table and warned: if the attacks did not end, he would lay out real dirt on all his persecutors. Aleinikov was released in peace. He left as a representative

military counterintelligence in the Western Group of Forces.

There, in Germany, watching how the Chechen mafia unfolded, how it besieged our garrisons, Anatoly Avvakumovich was convinced of the correctness of his conclusions, reported to the Security Council. Only now the Security Council either did not hear him, or did not want to hear. It would be interesting to look today at that note of General Aleinikov. A lot would be clear.

VICTIMS OF POLITICAL MASQUERADE

The head of the Illegal Intelligence Directorate, General Yuri Drozdov, finished the report. The chairman of the KGB, Chebrikov, anxiously looked into the face of the general. 77

— Who knows about it?

- Except you and Kryuchkov, no one ...

Kryuchkov at that time was Drozdov's chief, head of the First Main Directorate of the KGB.

What made the Chairman of the Committee so excited?

Drozdov reported on the results of exercises at one of the country's nuclear facilities. "Terrorists"

role which performed by the fighters of the Vympel reconnaissance and sabotage unit, went through all the protective belts of the nuclear power plant and "captured" the workshop where the reactor was located.

Our history has never seen anything like it. Despite the fright, the KGB chief had to bring to the attention the top leadership of the country sad results of the exercises.

Some of our statesmen, having read the KGB report, were even afraid to sign it, some only put a rank bird. Only one person was not afraid to admit shortcomings in the protection of nuclear facilities - Chairman of the Council of Ministers Nikolai Ryzhkov. He gave specific instructions to the heads of ministries. The 80s were coming to an end... Armenia and Azerbaijan "exploded". Nagorno-Karabakh served as the detonator.

The movement for "national self-determination" grew into a demand for independence and reunification with Armenia. Outbreaks of demonstrations and rallies resulted in bloody clashes.

In February 1988, the world shuddered when it first heard the name of a little-known Azerbaijani city - Sumgayit. Brutal murders, violence, reprisals swept the city blocks. The streets were drowned in the smoke of conflagrations and bonfires. Law enforcement agencies of the republic were powerless to

resist the "tsunami" of nationalism. The blood and death of the Armenians of Sumgayit were brought to the streets of Yerevan,

Leninakan, Kirovakan and other cities by thousands of indignant

and people demanding vengeance. Looting and killings of Azerbaijanis began. Troops were urgently transferred to Yerevan. Parts of the 104th airborne division entered Stepanakert and Baku. Through the efforts of the military, mass robberies, murders, and provocations were stopped. Enterprises started working, children were able to attend schools, classes continued at universities. 78

However, the fall of 1988 did not bring relief. Situation heated up.

The situation in Azerbaijan was approaching a critical point - in Baku, Kirovobad (now Ganja), in Fizuli, militants smashed the government and the Ministry of Internal Affairs. December 7, 1988 earthquake in

Armenia. There are 20 large settlements in the destruction zone. Half a million people were left without shelter, water and food. The number of victims was horrendous - more than 25 thousand people. Tbilisi "flared up" in the spring. The traditionally peaceful republic was turned into a

"sovereign, free" one, where anyone with a machine gun is "sovereign". The aggression of nationalism dealt a blow to the institutions of state power, was directed against law enforcement agencies and the army. The situation was getting out of control.

On January 19, the "National Front of Azerbaijan" declared a state of emergency in Baku. Entrances and exits to the city were blocked, the airport and seaports were closed. Radio and television stopped broadcasting. Factories and enterprises stopped. Baku was cut off from the country. The military units and institutions of the Baku garrison were, in essence,

into hostage.

Who is capable of acting in such a situation? Only the army and, first of all, its best, mobile forces are landing troops. On the night of January 19-20, the introduction of troops

into Baku began with a simultaneous sudden attack from three directions. The country was crawling into a chaos of ethnic strife,

August 1991 was approaching.

Soon, the White House will be at the epicenter of Moscow events and the elite special forces of Alpha and Vypel turned out to be more far-sighted than politicians. However, in each particular case, this far-sightedness doomed them to a difficult struggle for survival.

After the events of 1991, in the whirlpool of endless re-piping, by and large, no one needed Vypel. It did not seem to be reduced, but no one confirmed the need for its existence. The unit commander Boris Petrovich Beskov felt this vacuum. He fought as best he could, proving the need for Vypel. This is how he remembers those difficult days. "I then

I had to walk a lot in high offices. I remember
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Fesenko was appointed head of the First Directorate. I came to him, I said: "You are now creating management, intelligence,

take the "Vypel" with you." "Well, Boris Petrovich," he answers me, "now the policy is different. Under these political conditions, we cannot take you in."

For them, politics is like a girl's sundress, in the morning you put on one, in the evening - the other. The division must remain, regardless of the masquerade."

I think that Boris Petrovich said wonderful words, very subtle and capacious: the Vypel unit must always remain in action, regardless of the political masquerade.

Alas, it so happened that in those days, frantically trying to maintain their leadership positions, many shied away from the group like hell from incense. Still, a reconnaissance and sabotage unit, and even designed to work abroad. This is what a compromise for democratic power. They would look back at the coveted America, where no one even thought to close or re-profile the notorious Delta. Every government that came to power did only one thing - strengthened the special forces.

In our country, in fear, they tried to disown Vypel. True, then, in the ninety-first, the hands had not yet reached to "strangle" the unit. We decided to change his profile. It turned out that we did not have our own interests abroad, and therefore we created the second anti-terror group in the country, only with the aim of countering nuclear terrorism. Well, it's the right thing to do. Among the Vypelites, they decided to do everything wisely

- and not to forget their main business, not to radically break programs, and to master new tasks. However, new difficulties arose. Boris Petrovich Beskov says: - We wrote a lot of different notes on how we

can be used. It was difficult, because

Barannikov came as minister, who did not

know our specifics at all. Instructed Frolov to deal with us. This is a former party worker from Sverdlovsk, then he worked in the Ministry of Internal Affairs. From there, Barannikov took him to the Committee. So I asked him myself. I'm calling: can I come to

reception? You can. I came with documents explaining

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mi, what kind of unit it is, what are its capabilities, tasks of use.

I entered the office, and Frolov immediately asked me the question: "Well, what do you have there, a

regiment, or what?" Well, what can I say? He offered to read the certificate, said that he was ready to answer any question. He read, and as a result - nothing! And

then something completely incomprehensible began. By order of Barannikov, officers of the elite, unique special forces were used to guard the newly built houses in Ramenki.

Now, to be honest, you hear about it with surprise. But all this was. And the calls of the chief of his own security,

who categorically ordered officers to be sent to the entrances of houses. It turned out that large families are holding a demonstration in Ramenki, and now mothers with children can seize apartments. Then Beskov asked a reasonable question:

what should the Vypel officer do if these women, having picked up the kids in their arms, really break into the houses? The assertive Barannikovsky official could not answer.

This hastened the departure of Beskov from the post of head of the unit, but did not solve the problems of Vypel. The new unit

commander Gerasimov did a lot to rally the team, keep the group in combat readiness.

condition.

Politicians have also come to their senses. They realized in which country they live, they rule. In a country with a huge number of nuclear strategic facilities: nuclear power plants, factories for the production of nuclear weapons, submarine and surface nuclear ships, nuclear icebreaker fleet. Political instability has intensified the wave of terrorism. There was a real danger

of bandits infiltrating strategic facilities. Do I need to explain, if something like this happened, not only the country, the world could be on the brink of disaster.

It was then that they remembered the Vypel. He was given new tasks: the fight against nuclear terrorism. However, the commander

of the unit, a former special forces soldier, General Dmitry Gerasimov, considered this task much broader.

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Lieutenant SAS, he realized that no matter how well the counter-terrorist units were prepared for effective actions, they only react to the situation. Therefore, the concept of anti-terror is much more

complex and capacious than counter-terror. For the first thing to be done is to strengthen protection in advance, security measures at the facilities, teach the guards to recognize the enemy and take the necessary actions to repel the attack. This is the essence of anti-terror. But how to do that? It's easy to say - to increase protection, security measures ... Nothing like

this has happened to the guards since

the functioning of nuclear facilities, and, really, they hardly imagined how terrorists could act. No, this does not mean that our nuclear facilities were not protected. Were. In addition, several levels of protection, including the most complex - electronic. However, the real opponent of these levels of protection, fortunately, has not appeared for decades. But happiness could at any moment turn into trouble. To prevent this from happening, the "Vypelites" decided to act as opponents.

Examples of such operations were already known in the world. After Iranian Muslim terrorists used a suicide bomber to blow up a barracks in Beirut

U.S. Marines, President Reagan signed National Security Council Directive 138, which laid out the foundations for a new American course in the fight against terrorism. Shortly after the adoption of this directive, the Deputy Chief of the General Staff of

the US Navy, Vice Admiral Janes Lyons, filed a note addressed to his boss.

In it, the admiral wrote: "I created the Red Team ... It will plan terrorist attacks on ships and coastal installations of the US Navy around the world. It has the task of identifying the vulnerabilities of the targets of attack and planning attacks according to the known capabilities and ethnic characteristics of terrorist groups... Along with preparation, the Red Team attack scenario will also make recommendations on the security measures that should be taken to prevent or so make it harder for terrorists 82

denial of terrorist acts that they will be forced from them refuse".

For America, such measures are quite understandable. They were not worried about the internal situation in the country, which is quite stable, but about the gigantic military organism of the United States, scattered all over the globe. The USSR, and

later Russia, had their own concerns, so Vympel, in essence, had the same tasks as the Red Team, only multiplied by nuclear security problems. After all, if, for example, we are talking about a nuclear icebreaker fleet, then we are the only ones in the world

who own such a fleet. Of course, everything that the head of the Red Team, commander (corresponding to the land rank of lieutenant colonel) Richard Marchinko, was

provided with, could seem like a fantasy for the Vympel fighters. American "seals" even had their own aircraft. Their liner was located near Dulles International Airport in Washington, in the hangar of the private company Butler Aviation, and they could take off at any moment without attracting attention to themselves. "Vympelovtsy" faced completely different problems. When they arrived in Murmansk for the Blockade exercises and measured the water in which they were to work, it turned out that the radiation background was twice as high as the norm. And this meant the need for complete

processing, the so-called degassing, that is, wetsuits, which, of course, were in a single copy for each, had to be cut and burned. It is impossible to imagine a greater catastrophe for the Vympel combat swimmer. Moreover, the wetsuits were branded, "NATO", however, disposable, but for us - for life.

However, despite all the difficulties, the staff of the general

Gerasimov's nuclear facilities were professionally very
stormed. They penetrated the heart of our nuclear science - the nuclear capital
"Arzamas-16", carried out the "seizure" of the Beloyarsk, Kalinin, nuclear power
plants, carried out a "terrorist" attack on the ~~flagship~~ ^{flagship} of the country's nuclear
icebreaker fleet - the nuclear-powered ship Siberia. In addition to nuclear facilities,
Vympel fighters "checked" the security of the Riga pre-port
plant, the Novopolotsk plant, and worked at enterprises in the Caucasus.

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Among the employees of the state security agencies of the CIS countries, those raids are still legendary. It happens that "Vympel" people listen to these legends about themselves with pleasure.

As you know, the American "Red Team" of Richard Marchinko ended his journey in a very deplorable way. The Seal unit was disbanded, and their commander ended up behind bars.

This is how Dale Andrade, author of Trial by Fire, and a historian of special operations, describes one of the hostage-takings by Marchinko's men.

"When the mood of the gathering turned bad, Marchinko ordered two "seals" to go to Sheridan, the head of security of the Seal Beach Missile Weapons Base, Orange County, who was taken hostage, and give him a new hole in the ass. Together with the Esseke videographer, the two went to the Don Quixote Motel. Shouting at the top
of their lungs, they burst into the room where Sheridan was.

He was still tied to a chair in the center of the room, with a pillowcase draped over his head. The masked "seals" grabbed the helpless Sheridan, threw him on the bed and began to rip off his clothes. One of them, shouting out questions, beat

and pushed him.

"You cowardly creature," one of the "seals" shouted as he ripped off Sheridan's trousers. He dragged him into the bathroom, grabbing onto the pillowcase that was still on the victim's head and wrapped around the victim's neck. Strong "seals" grabbed the bound man by the ankles and

began to lower his head into the toilet over and over again, flushing the water. The pillowcase got wet. Sheridan began to choke and choke.

It seemed to go on forever. Finally, the seals pulled Sheridan's head out of the toilet, but only to dip him into a bath filled with water. Suddenly one of the "seals" slipped on the wet floor and fell on Sheridan's

back. "You broke my rib!" Sheridan yelled, but the torture continued. The Seals already understood that they had crossed the line between realistic combat training and frank

cruelty."

The historian's story is perceived, rightly, as something unreal. However, everything was documented on video.

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film. And although the cameraman subsequently edited this episode at the insistence of Marchinko, the guilt of the "seals" in the ill-treatment of Sheridan was proved. Fortunately, nothing like this

happened, and could not happen, with us. And not only because Vympel, unlike Marchinko's

Red Team, was not so independent and independent, other things also played a role - both those and other "terrorists", and the security service felt like members of a single team, making one common thing. And although no one wanted to lose, the guards knew how to be noble.

This is how one of the Vympel fighters recalls the exercises in the Caucasus:

"We disappeared for two weeks. The food is over. ate occasionally potatoes, the fields of which sometimes came across along the road.

We walked for two weeks, reached the oil pipeline, laid "mines".

We've already been buried. They said that people don't go to the places where your guys went / When we returned, the Georgians arranged such a holiday for us: they gave us drink, food, treated quails, steamed in the bathhouse. And they looked at us as if they were people from another dimension."

Of course, this does not mean that the "Vympelovtsy", who played "terrorists", had no problems in their relations with employees and, especially, with the heads of security services. I had to act in such a way that both the sheep were safe

and the wolves were fed. Life forced. I remember that in the same place, in the Caucasus, they conducted exercises at one of the plants, "dug up" shortcomings, miscalculations. The local head of the committee was reported, and the report was smoothed upstairs. Otherwise, one could say goodbye to the training of "Vympel" climbers in the Caucasus. What can you do, we are not in the USA.

There were other cases when, for example, the head of security of one of the first persons of the state was simply afraid to "compete" with the "terrorists" from Vympel. The elementary fear of losing your own chair worked. True, the "Vympelovtsy", at the request of the guards, did not conduct exercises,

and demonstration classes. Protected person in the course of "terrorism"

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tic" raid was "destroyed" in 40 seconds. Bodyguards ran to the scene of the attack when the combat swimmers went under water and no bubbles were visible on the surface of the sea.

Well, as they say, the Americans have their problems, we have ours. The Seal unit was defeated only because Marchinko ran his team like a gang of pirates.

According to one source, the US Navy command left only six "seals" from the "Red Team" in the service - three on each coast in the role of security consultants. Their task includes trips to various naval bases, but only at the request of the base commander for reading

lectures on terrorist activities. Practice sessions were never held again. Other sources are more pessimistic. They say that since 1993, the command of the Navy has not involved "seals" at all in checking the security system of naval facilities. Under the leadership of General Dmitry Gerasimov, in 1995, we conducted exercises called Atom-95.

"Vympelovtsy" operated at the Kursk nuclear power plant. However, there is no need to talk about the activation of this work. The special unit is not fenced off from the whole world, and therefore its employees now have many other concerns. The war in Chechnya, organized crime is gaining momentum, terrorism has unfolded in the capital and other parts of the country. In a word, Vympel has more than enough cases.

"GREETINGS"! MAFIO GIOVANNI

In our press, Group A is often compared to Vympel. However, despite the external similarity, these are largely different divisions.

If "Alpha" was created by Yu. Andropov in 1974 as an anti-terror group, then the tasks of "Vympel" from the day it was founded were different - reconnaissance and sabotage. "Vympelovtsy" were preparing to work abroad, on enemy territory. Hence, in the training program, operational work, regional studies, a foreign language.

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And the exercises - Alpha has work on airplanes, helicopters, ships, Vympel has partisan actions, penetration into sensitive enterprises, factories, the capture of a secret carrier.

It just so happened that if we take equal periods of time, for example, ten years, then Alpha managed to "work" with the terrorist Vlasenko, who seized the American embassy in Moscow, neutralized two bandits armed with machine guns in Sarapul and rescued 25 hostages, held in Tbilisi combat operation to free the TU-134 aircraft with passengers on board.

Vympel had none of this. Yes, it couldn't be. All ten years since 1981, the fighters of the special forces group studied, prepared, traveled to Vietnam, Cuba, Nicaragua to exchange experience. And they were biding their time.

This hour struck unexpectedly in 1992. I had to work for foreigners, but not in another country or on another continent, but in the capital - Moscow. It was not far to go - from his native Balashikha to the area of \u200b\u200bthree stations, to the Leningradsкая hotel. It just so happened that the "clients" of "Vympel" in their first,

in fact, military operation were specialists in the oldest criminal profession - counterfeiters. At first glance, for an uninitiated person,

making counterfeit money is not such a serious crime as, for example, banditry, theft, robbery. Alas, this opinion is fundamentally wrong. Since ancient times, states, only realizing themselves as such, punished counterfeiters! Although in fairness it must be said that some rulers of states themselves were the first manufacturers of counterfeit money. Wanting to deceive his people, the French king Philip IV ordered to add so much copper to the coins

that soon only one name remained from them - gold. And the king received the apt nickname "red-nosed", since red copper most quickly appeared on the nose of a royal person, minted on coins. The King of France was not the only one in the galaxy of statesmen, counterfeiters. His "colleague" on the throne, the English king Henry VI, had the same weakness.

The issuance of counterfeit money has long been an effective tool struggle both in foreign policy and in the economy.

During the "Time of Troubles" Poland minted fake Russian coins, and the rebellious southerners during the fight against

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The North set up counterfeit US government money. Napoleon covered the enormous expenses of his wars of conquest not only from the pockets of the enslaved peoples, but also by making counterfeit money. Printing houses that printed this money were located in Germany, Poland and even in Moscow.

After the war of 1812, the Russian Senate had to carry out a monetary reform - to replace the old banknotes with new ones. Counterfeit money was also used

as an economic sabotage against the Bolshevik government. They supplied soldiers and officers of the Russian Volunteer Army, gangs operating in the country.

Later, in 1926, England and Germany tried to undermine the Russian economy by injecting counterfeit money. The oil tycoon Deterding, who lost huge incomes as a result of the revolution, took up printing fakes. British intelligence, using the White Guard émigré movement, tried to smuggle counterfeit chervonets into Russia. Bodies of the Cheka managed to prevent sabotage. However, the largest and most elaborate banknote counterfeiting scam was carried out by Hitler during World War II. The counterfeiting of money was put on

a broad business and scientific basis. Fascist counterfeiters produced a kind of unique forgery of British pounds sterling banknotes. With the help of scientific

research, the composition of the paper on which the pounds were made was discovered. The Germans bought a special kind of flax from Turkey, made linen from it, and then paper. Cliches for printing money were prepared by the best engravers

in Germany. They were advised by German counterfeiters,

temporarily released from prison. German chemists carefully selected paints for false pounds. The work of the Nazis was crowned with success - pounds sterling from Germany flooded the world market. Diversion with pounds prevented to complete the defeat of Nazi Germany in 1945. Later, British intelligence will find out all the details of the operation and find out the names of its leaders. It's interesting that

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German saboteur No. 1, Otto Skorzeny, will be among the inspirers of the unprecedented action.

Our country had to experience another boom in the printing of counterfeit money in the early 90s. Counterfeit banknotes were thrown onto the market from criminal Chechnya, from the Baltic countries, Poland. Counterfeit dollars began to be imported from abroad. Vympel had to take part in the seizure of a large batch of fake bucks. And this is how things went.

Two acquaintances met in Riga - Yuri, the head of one of the joint ventures, and his old girlfriend. The woman now lived abroad, in Switzerland, where she earned a piece of bread as a "moth of the night."

A friend, who is also the head of the company, asks to find him a partner for commercial transactions behind the curtain. "Butterfly" brings him together with his Italian friend Giovanni. The partners

quickly understood each other. The next meeting is scheduled in Munich, where Giovanni comes along with the organizer of the future counterfeiting company, a certain Enrico. The Balts were offered a 100-dollar bill, counterfeit of course,

and the opportunity to consider the sale of a large batch of "greens" on the Russian dense market. On the eve of the Italians tried to "shove" two million counterfeit dollars in Bulgaria, but ... the fate of the villain turned away from them. Now all hope was on the Russian businessman. The Italians and the Balts met twice more, in Frankfurt and Munich. Here, the details of the future operation were already being worked

out. Yuri decided to sell counterfeit bucks in Moscow. There could be no misfire. The metropolitan market is large and insatiable. Indeed, soon there was an accomplice,

an actor of the theater of the Moscow City Council. During the tour of the Moscow troupe in Riga, they met.

Soon a message came from Moscow, a chic buyer was found. Take falshbucks in unlimited quantities. And Yuri, being in the capital, decided to check the quality of the goods himself. Soviet devices confirmed the authenticity of the banknotes. The Italians did not disappoint. Meanwhile, in sunny Italy, they were

preparing for a visit to Moscow. Giovanni sent confirmation that a trial batch would soon be delivered to the capital - a million fake "greens". In the future, Italian mafiosi are ready

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were thrown into the Russian market up to two million "greens" weekly.

Giovanni and his lawyer Raffaele indeed soon left the plane at Sheremetyevo-2. They came to verify the solvency of Moscow buyers.

The day before, Yuri, at the request of his Italian partners, bought 12 tickets for the return trip from Moscow to Kyiv. As the Italians explained, the tickets were intended for Ukrainian militants who would cover up their deal from all sorts of accidents. However, as it turned out, Giovanni and his lawyer flew in light. A

bag with a million falshbucks moved in a minibus, an Italian-Ukrainian joint venture. The joint venture was registered in Donetsk, and therefore there was nothing unusual about the route of the minibus. The Italians were on their way to their Ukrainian counterparts. The most striking thing is that the cargo with fake "greenery" crossed Switzerland, Austria, Czechoslovakia, Ukraine. In

Donetsk, he was loaded onto a train bound for Moscow, and he arrived safely in the capital. There were five customs borders behind, strict control, but a fact

there is: "bucks" safely reached the white stone.

The exchange was scheduled for December 6, 1992 at the Leningradskaya Hotel. The special

services, having received data on 12 cover fighters, decided to use not ordinary operatives, but the power of the Vypmel unit. When the cars of the mafia stopped at the hotel, it

was decided to take them here, not letting them inside. Otherwise, we would have had to storm the hotel with a fight.

The decision to take the counterfeiters in the open was not an easy one, because the "Vypmelovtsy", in fact, openly went to the mafia cars. In addition, it was getting dark, and visibility was deteriorating, and the place was quite lively, there were a lot of passers-by around.

And yet, the decision was made. In the blink of an eye, next to the cars of the mafiosi, cars slowed down and fighters jumped out of them in bulletproof vests, in special helmets, with pistols in their hands. A few seconds later the bandits were lying on the pavement. The place of capture was illuminated by powerful spotlights. Vypmel snipers controlled nearby houses

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in case of opening fire by militants. However, there were no militants. The operation as a whole ended successfully, if not for the accidental shot of one of the soldiers of the unit, which sounded during the arrest of the counterfeiters. The employee injured his comrade.

In the hospital, a letter was handed over to the "Vypmel" man. Mafiosi Giovanni sympathetically wrote:

"Yesterday I learned that You were wounded by our time do not want the arrest ... With these lines to justify what has been done by I would relation To to you, I wanted humbly you in the hope forgiveness and express your respect reverence. And

meet you on 12/19/92. wish you good health and all the best.
Moscow.

Giovanni."

This is how the mafia got caught.

This was how our young, volatile market was saved from massive injections of fake bucks. The Italian "Cosa Nostra" got acquainted with the "Vypmel".

OPERATION TRINITY

I will say right away: everything that Vypmel did often has no analogues in world practice. The Americans are trying to do something similar. But, I repeat, similar. For only our country has a nuclear icebreaker fleet. And therefore, only Vypmelovtsy had to land on the deck of the Siberian nuclear-powered ship. Neither before nor after anyone could do it.

Unique combat exercises, of course, were not an end in themselves.

Group "A" shared some of their "developments". However, even she, despite her rich combat experience, could not help much, since the assault on an ordinary railway car seized by terrorists is fundamentally different from taking a special car with nuclear weapons.

I had to rely only on myself. And on your own experience gained during training. One of these very

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notable exercises were those codenamed Arzamas-16. But before starting a story about

these, no doubt, unique teachings, I would like to go back a few decades ago.

...State of New Mexico, USA. 450 kilometers south of the city Los Alamos. Abandoned Alamogordo Air Base.

July 16, 1945 in the strictest secrecy here

The operation was codenamed "Trinity".

It was the world's first test of an American atomic bomb. The bomb explosion shocked the participants in the operation. One of the generals, unable to bear the terrible picture of the growing fireball, said in fear: "My God! Those long-haired ones got it wrong." However, the general was wrong. The test was successful. And already on

August 6, a similar nuclear charge was dropped on Hiroshima.

August 9 "Fat Man" caused a deadly "mushroom" over Nagasaki. These explosions brought unprecedented destruction and hitherto unthinkable casualties.

US President G. Truman received a brief message about the successful bomb test in New Mexico during the Big Three Potsdam Conference. Soon a report came from General L. Groves, which described the power of the new weapon. Truman became more resolute and tough.

On June 24, he decided to inform Stalin about the experiment. And he stressed that this is a completely new weapon, superior to any other. Stalin, as they say, did not raise an eyebrow. How

Truman himself recalls, he congratulated him on his success. Until now, there are two points of view, supposedly Stalin perfectly understood the hint and on the same day expressed his intention to talk with Kurchatov about speeding up work, and the second, expressed by General S. Shtemenko in his memoirs: "... Neither Antonov (at that time the head of the General Headquarters), nor, apparently, Stalin himself had the impression that we were talking about a weapon based on completely new principles. Be that as it may, no additional instructions were given to the General Staff."

Most likely, Shtemenko's statement is based on that firm confidence that the nuclear project could not be solved without

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General Staff. He could, especially in the early stages, as he was supervised by the all-powerful department of L. Beria. By the way, something similar happened in the USA. Even the Vice President and the State Department were initially unaware of the Manhattan Project. The American atomic bomb "blew up" the fragile military balance between the USSR and the USA. There was no alternative to nuclear weapons. The Soviet Union could save itself and the world only by creating its own atomic bomb. Moreover, the US National Security Council has already begun planning nuclear strikes on our country. The first draft of an atomic attack on the USSR was called "Russia's Strategic Vulnerability to a Limited Air Attack" and went down

in history as report No. 329. It was published in November 1945. And in 1948-1949, with a high probability, there was talk of strikes against the Soviet Union. All the details were signed: 1947 objects would be attacked, within 30 days 2.7 million people would be killed and 4 million wounded.

I understand that today these words are perceived extremely painfully, but historical facts are a stubborn thing. And we must not forget them. Moreover, the US "nuclear attack plans" forced us to hurry. We, really, had somewhere to invest money - half the country lay in ruins. But billions had to be invested in the creation of a "nuclear shield". There was no other way for our country. And so the beginning of 1943 was marked by the issuance of a government decree on the organization of work on the use of

atomic energy for military purposes, and soon the creation of a special laboratory of the USSR Academy of Sciences.

At that time, the little-known young scientist Kurchatov headed this laboratory. From the Politburo, the atomic project was first led by Molotov, then by Beria. Department "C" was created in the NKVD, which coordinated the activities of the country's intelligence agencies on "problem No. 1".

Intelligence helped our scientists in every possible way in their work on the atomic project. And

although Stalin was constantly informed about the successful progress of work in the USA, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki spurred the "leader of the peoples." An emergency meeting was held

Politburo and GKO, which resulted in the creation of the Special Committee and the Atomic Bomb Technical Council (AB).

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The special committee was headed by Beria, Pervukhin became his deputy, members were Malenkov, Voznesensky, People's Commissar of Ammunition Vannikov, Academicians Kapitsa and Kurchatov, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Zavenyagin. The first bomb of the future "nuclear

shield" of the Soviet Union was first made in 1/5 size, then - in full size. And immediately a problem arose: powerful explosions of conventional explosives were required. But where? Moscow and the Moscow suburbs were not suitable for these purposes. It was necessary to create a design office away from large settlements and at the same time not very remote from the capital.

However, sparsely populated and proximity to the center were far from the only requirements. Since large volumes of blasting were to be carried out, a vast territory was needed. After all, landfills, special sites, workshops, and warehouses were to be located here. On the other hand, the perfect "desert" also did not fit. We need at least elementary energy capacities and initial material and technical base.

They began to look for a suitable "bearish corner". But they couldn't find it for a long time. Finally, we stopped at the village of Sarov, Temnikovsky district, in Mordovia. Academician Y. Khariton recalled

that time in this way: "This

We liked the place, we realized that it is suitable for us ... "

Today there is a lot of talk about why exactly here, in one of the shrines of Orthodoxy, the first nuclear center was located? There is no mysticism or otherworldly forces here. The time was such that little attention was paid to religion, cultural monuments of Orthodoxy. There were other tasks. Yes, great, yes, fateful for Russia. Now this is a historical reality. On the same land, side by side - the center of the Orthodox

religion, which did a lot to preserve the identity of Rus', and the first nuclear city that saved Rus' from nuclear encroachment, preserving the independence of the state.

"Arzamas-16", and now again the city of Sarov, is often called nuclear capital of the country. So it is, in essence, it is.

For almost half a century, no one doubted the security system of the nuclear capital. However, other times have come. International

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Conflicts, wars, and terrorist attacks have raised an alarming question: is the old security system capable of guaranteeing the security of the "nuclear capital", and, therefore, of Russia as a whole? Theoretically, the answer was yes. But such an answer no

longer satisfied the leadership of the federal nuclear center. The Vympel special unit came to the aid of atomic scientists, after the events of 1991, it was redirected to combat nuclear terrorism.

"TERRORISTS" IN "NUCLEAR CITY"

"Vympel" was given the task of one of the groups playing for the "terrorists" to penetrate the city, overcome all means and levels of protection and conditionally seize a nuclear weapon. The second group was given the task of freeing the

hostages,
captured during the attack by "terrorists", and ammunition.

To say that it turned out to be extremely difficult is to say nothing. In the "nuclear city", with the beginning of the exercises by the local territorial bodies of the KGB, the party, Soviet, administrative organizations were given the task of reporting on each new person, whether he was the president of the country or the Lord God himself.

Add here the local police, secret informants, and even the staff members of the Committee. It would seem that even a mouse will not slip into Arzamas-16, and not only the Vympel employees who arrived from Moscow.

Major Anatoly Yermolin, the head of the special operations department of the group, understood all this. He had to solve this puzzle by all means. Dozens of options for entering the city were "born" and discarded. Nothing fit. All of them had flaws, which means they entailed the "flare" of the Vympel fighters and their capture by the opposing side. This meant the failure of the operation.

Again and again the group gathered, every day they discussed, new ideas rolled out.

In the course of these "brainstorming" Yermolin more than once caught himself on thoughts, who is right in the age-old dispute between "operatives" and "bo

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Eviks. The fact is that, unlike Alfa, a purely combat unit, Vympel is an operational combat unit, that is, its employees must be able to work from illegal positions, including abroad. What does it mean from illegal positions? And this means - to carry out tasks similar to the

one that was assigned to Yermolin's group during the Arzamas-16 exercises. That is, with the help of a well-established legend, penetrate the city and attack the plant. This will help the opposing side, following the results of the operation, take into account the shortcomings in the protection of the object. Says the former head of the department of special

operations of the Vympel detachment, Major Anatoly Yermolin:

- How did it all start? From what I understood: Arzamas-16 is the most complex and top-secret facility in the country. Suffice it to say: our first atomic bomb was created there. This is a top-secret city, there are villages around it, and it

is very difficult to enter there from legal positions. Another thing was also clear: all the local authorities were already,

figuratively speaking,
"stand on the ears" and wait for us.

That is, the counterintelligence regime is very tough. The first thing we did was to seriously study everything related to Arzamas-16. After all, you need a good legend. There is an old proven principle in intelligence: if there is a great legend, you will always complete the task. We began our work with the Lenin Library, with the history of the city where we were to work. And

found a clue. This place is associated with the name of St. Seraphim of Sarov. Near the object is the Diveevsky Monastery - one of the most revered among Russian pilgrims.

We decided to "become a legend" like this: we are allegedly creating a company that will deal with children's educational tourism to holy places. We made real documents, seals, concluded contracts. I acted as the president of the firm, and all my guys are employees. The trip was made in order to develop a route for the upcoming pilgrimage.

We started from the distant approaches, from Nizhny Novgorod. Although from there to Arzamas-16 it was necessary to get by bus another six hours. 96

Everything went at first, like in a movie. We boarded a train in Moscow, arrived in Nizhny, went to a hotel. Frankly, in Novgorod we felt quite safe. They calculated and were sure that counterintelligence would certainly not "cover" him. Far away, and not strong enough.

And here an incident occurred, from which, as it is recognized Anatoly Alexandrovich, "thrown into a fever."

In the lobby of the hotel where his group settled down, a man approached them and introduced himself as an ITAR-TASS correspondent for the Nizhny Novgorod region. He asked me to tell you where you came from, for what purpose? As it turned out later, it really was a correspondent. Seeing the visitors, he decided to question them in the hope of getting something interesting for his agency. However, Yermolin felt uneasy. "Really" pierced? he thought anxiously, mistaking the journalist for an operative of the territorial KGB. But he didn't show it and "lay out" the legend, "rolling" it on a real Nizhny Novgorod. The legend did not raise any doubts, the "Tassovite" even advised me to apply to the university, the pedagogical institute, to the archive. There, in his opinion, they could help with the search for materials related to St. Seraphim of Sarov.

And so they did: the next week, Yermolin's group worked in Nizhny Novgorod, and in Arzamas, local committee members were already detaining "suspects" with might and main.

The results of the work "on the distant approaches" turned out to be more than fruitful. One of the subgroups found a pre-revolutionary map with the designation of holy places. Employees of "Vympel" compared it with their topographic map, and it turned out that the holy places are just located along the perimeter of the object. It was very handy. The scouts met and entered into a trusting relationship with the employees of the archive, made friends with several

influential Nizhny Novgorod scientists were able to enlist their support. In the hands of the "Vympelovites" there was even a letter with a petition to the authorities of Arzamas-16, to the director of the museum to assist in the noble cause of studying the places associated with the name of St. Seraphim of Sarov. When the group was "armed"

with letters of recommendation, "shuttle" trips to "Arzamas" for reconnaissance began. Each of the subgroups left for no more than a day.

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The commander understood that his people would inevitably fall into the field of view of counterintelligence, and therefore I wanted to protect them as much as

possible. Knowledge of psychology, the ability to win over people helped the "Vympel" in the most seemingly incredible situations. By the will of fate, one of the scouts, opening the door to the office of the head of the Diveevo administration, ran into a local committee "opera" on the threshold. He had just directed the head that in the event of the appearance of any stranger who utters the word "Arzamas-16", report it immediately. The scout also named a sacramental word, but before that he conveyed greetings to the official from his favorite institute teacher from Nizhny Novgorod. He was deeply moved and confessed in a friendly way: "You know, here the KGB men do not give rest. Wait a week, then I'll take you to the places myself.

Of course, an immediate call was out of the question. It's hard to believe in this today, but the scouts were able to "charm" the abbess of the Diveevo convent. And she settled them for a while in her monastery. "Vympelovtsy" behaved humbly and even fasted along with the nuns.

Counterintelligence, which blocked everything in the district, could not dream even in a dream that a group of "militants" was based in a convent and was conducting its reconnaissance attacks from there.

In a word, during the daily shuttle trips, subgroups conducted reconnaissance of the area, identified the most vulnerable places in the protection of the object, identified and studied approaches to it.

Another important feature was reported to the commander: a river flows through the territory of Arzamas. Its depth is not great, but there was an opportunity to slip through, especially since there are two combat swimmers in the group who have undergone special training.

Nizhny Novgorod, as you know, is a river, port city, it's not a problem to get a diving suit. In a word, the group soon owned three winter diving suits. The plans for the passage along the river were reported

to the mediator, the head of the exercises, and the opposite side was counted as a defeat. 98

However, the teachings did not end there. Yermolin's group received a new introductory - to go to the object on the most fortified site, in essence, storming in the forehead. We decided to work in the development of the legend. Those who have already been

"Lighted up", go on this site, of course, come across. On the other, not illuminated part of the group, they acted differently.

For 26 kilometers to Arzamas, they found a village and set off. We walked all night, overcame invisible two lines of defense, three secrets. At the same time, the soldiers of the internal troops, who were in secret, betrayed themselves: some with conversations, some with a lit cigarette. Everyone thought that "saboteurs" would not turn up on his site. Vympelovtsy reached the line of attack at 4 am,

minute by minute. Then the intermediary said that at night, closer to the appointed time, the officers of the unit guarding Arzamas were getting more and more encouraged and laughing: they say, where are the scouts getting lost ... And now 4 hours, there is silence, everyone is dozing, and suddenly they report in full voice : "Mediator, I am a group, ready to complete the task!" This report had the effect of an exploding bomb.

The Guardians lost again. And,

finally, the third introductory, already at the request of the opposite side - to overcome all electronic means of protection and get into the holy of holies - a special site. Yermolin and his guys agreed. To complete the task, they asked only for a rope and a ladder. They were given both.

It took the scouts twenty-three minutes to pass all the lines without a single breakdown. I will not reveal all the secrets of that unique passage. He taught the "guards" a lot. I can only say that this is a fait accompli, no matter how fantastic it may seem.

So, Yermolin's group completed its task. Did it brilliantly. I will not list the nuances of the professional "pluses" and "minuses" of the operation. Experts have long understood them. It seems to me that the first stage of the Arzamas 16 exercises convincingly proved the importance and primacy of the intellectual attack in the activities of the special forces. It seems to me that these exercises were an intellectual duel, a struggle of minds, and only then a confrontation of fighting qualities.

However, there was a second stage. No less difficult and no less stressful.

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So, again "Arzamas-16". On the eve of the second stage of the operation, the Vympel fighters were received by the director of the plant, leading scientists. They were shown the house where Academician Andrei Dmitrievich Sakharov lived and worked. Members of the special forces visited the museum of nuclear technology. After seeing

everything, there was something to think about. What was created by the minds of scientists and engineers not only impressed, but also amazed with its power. However,

the very idea that a unique object could end up in the hands of terrorists was no less shocking. It was necessary to work, to look for ways to counter the "plague of the 20th century."

It's easy to say work. Already at the reconnaissance stage, many problems arose, without resolving which, it was impossible to start the exercises. Everything rested on the most severe mode

security: a worker who carried an ordinary match into the factory was fired immediately. But then what about teachings?

They are based on the use of real mine-explosive and special means, and simply ordinary small arms. If a shot occurs and the bullet hits a metal support, ignition from a spark is possible. This is known even to a child.

The scientists carefully listened to the doubts of the members of the special forces group and ... offered some kind of help. For example, in the manufacture of a completely new aluminum alloy ammunition. That is, the shell of a pistol or machine gun bullet changed. When in contact with metal, such a bullet did not strike a spark.

The question arose, where to carry out the operation? After all, the shop is a real, operating one, in which every day they assemble nuclear weapons. I emphasize nuclear. And if it was impossible to bring

a match here for decades, now they were going to plant and undermine real warheads here. To propose such a thing in the old days would have been considered insane. However, in the past, the issue of protection against terrorism was not so acute. Initially, scientists proposed to carry out the operation to

"liberate" a nuclear weapon out of harm's way, that is, away from the assembly shop. But did it make sense to fence the garden, to go to Arzamas-16 to work in an abstract barn? "Vympelovtsy"

reasonably noted that they could find a similar barn in their native suburbs.

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Finally, after long disputes, they managed to convince the management of the plant - the "nuclear" gave the go-ahead for the operation to be carried out in

the assembly shop. After the reconnaissance, another unforeseen circumstance arose directly at the facility: the proximity of a nuclear munitions depot. What a destructive force this warehouse contains, everyone understood. I had to think here, calculate, look for the safest options.

If we talk about tactical difficulties, they were also enough. For example, difficult approaches to the assembly shop.

After all, the workshop is unusual, located in a lowland, and around it is a high earthen parapet. Everything was calculated in such a way that in the event of an accident, the blast wave would not be concentrated in the workshop, but would go outside. The workshop is made of glass, huge frames from floor to ceiling, twenty meters

high. In the center of the workshop, a charge was installed, only without a nuclear

warhead. Since it is not possible to enter the workshop in a real situation of a terrorist seizure, the situation was studied covertly, using surveillance devices. The role of "terrorists" was

performed by employees of territorial bodies. Only in this way it was possible to most objectively evaluate the actions of the anti-terror group. It was led by the chief

department of the division "Vympel" Sergey Klimentiev. Here's how he recalls those days: - The situation is close to real. Negotiations with the "terrorists" did not give any results, it was decided to storm the workshop from three directions. One group walked through the back rooms, to

metal door leading to the workshop, the other two - through the windows.

There was another problem for the fighters who were supposed to act through the door. They were in close proximity to the combat explosion and could have suffered. I had to weld a metal shield for cover. The groups moved out at my command. The command for the assault was an explosion, since the secrecy

was complete. We didn't even use the radio. Communication was kept only with demolition workers who were on the street and worked with hidden fittings.

The door was massive, double. However, the explosion performed professionally: one door fell out, the other

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inside the workshop. I myself was pleasantly surprised: the work, as they say, is jewelry. After all, we expected that the inner door would have to be beaten out with a ram.

The "terrorists" were at the far end of the workshop. The local leadership was also in the workshop: they wanted to see the progress of the operation. The entire assault from undermining to freeing the hostages took three seconds. This is fine. The workshop is

approximately 50 x 30 meters in size. Ammunition in middle. So I had to run fast.

The operation did not end there: we had to localize the situation and carry out tasks up to the escort of the "terrorists".

Both sides were satisfied with the results of the exercise. Although, to be honest, there was something to work on. What

conclusions did we draw after the exercise? You know what I thought after everything that happened: God forbid this should happen. After all, nuclear weapons mean thousands of lives. Here are exercises, and then goosebumps, but if in a real combat situation? Although, when summarizing the results,

the improbability of such a situation was noted. And yet who will give a 100% guarantee? Terrorism is sophisticated, it is constantly being improved.

The next object that Klimentyev's group had to work on was a special wagon for transporting nuclear weapons. He, on a training assignment, was captured by "terrorists".

There are difficulties here. The car is parked in an open area. How to advance to complete the task? Indeed,

according to the terms of the exercises, the "terrorists" should not notice the capture group. They have their own line of conduct. And the local committee members playing this role behaved quite naturally: they left the car, inspected the tracks on which it stood, followed the changes in the situation.

However, ways of a hidden approach, nevertheless, were found. A mobile railway crane helped: its two base platforms were connected by an arrow. An arrow 40 meters long. One of the sites was located next to the car, the other - in a fairly secretive place. It was from here that two Vypel employees climbed the boom and acted from above on the Roliglass suspension system. They flew into the car windows unexpectedly for the "terrorists".

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Combat mine-explosive means in this case are not operational, expensive. were convinced railway carriage were used: Vypel demolitionists, however, that the massive car doors would not withstand the impact of their special equipment. Local experts thought the opposite. There was a dispute. To resolve it, we went to the landfill. "Vypelovtsy" were given the opportunity to work with the same designs that were used in the car.

Arzamas specialists were very surprised by the result and admitted defeat.

Klimentiev's division consisted of several groups: management, assault groups, snipers, demolition men.

The assault on the car began with the simultaneous advancement of demolition men and snipers. In other words, the bombers acted under the cover of snipers.

After the senior "subversive" group reported that the mining had been carried out, Klimentyev gave the command to advance the assault groups. In a real situation, this nomination lasts more than one hour. Ultimately, it is not the time spent on the advance that matters, but the result - a covert approach to the object of attack. For the violation of secrecy puts the whole operation on the brink of failure.

On that day, luck accompanied the attackers. They were not seen by the "terrorists". Conditional explosions sounded, and the capture groups burst into the car through the windows and doors and neutralized the "bandits". This, in fact, ended these unique and

still one-of-a-kind teachings. The results were summed up. Each of the parties has accumulated experience, which is so necessary in our turbulent times. The exercises "Arzamas-16" showed a high professional

skill and operational experience of Vypel employees.

CAPTURE ICEBREAKER SIBIR

These exercises were codenamed "Blockade". They were and still are the only ones on planet Earth. No one has ever even tried to do something like that. Only in Hollywood movies do terrorists hijack ships from

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nuclear weapons on board and, of course, the next "Rimbaud" almost alone frees the ship. In life, the capture of such a ship by a group of madmen is capable of

put the world on the brink of a nuclear catastrophe. However, if it is extremely problematic to capture a warship, there are dozens, and sometimes hundreds of armed people, then, for example, a nuclear icebreaker is a very vulnerable target. The experience of liberation of such

a ship, even theoretically, does not exist in the world, since the Soviet Union possessed an atomic icebreaker fleet. Nevertheless, this problem goes far beyond the boundaries of one country. Terrorists who have seized a nuclear icebreaker will be able to drive it to the shores of any country. And what then?.. Analysts and militants of the Vypel special forces tried to answer this question during exercises on the basis

of the Russian nuclear icebreaker fleet in Murmansk.

According to the Blockade exercise plan, the fighters of the group were tasked with releasing a nuclear icebreaker captured by terrorists. How did it happen? From myself

I can only say that the

assault on the nuclear-powered ship was carried out from three directions - from the ground, from the air and from under the water. The actions of the coastal group were, of course, auxiliary. Just at the time of the exercises, the icebreaker "Siberia" was standing at the pier.

The main groups are paratroopers and combat swimmers. How are they acted? I don't think anyone can tell you better than them.

A word to the combat swimmer and parachutist:

- The exercises took place in 1993. When we arrived in Murmansk, we, a group of combat swimmers, were accommodated in one of the cabins of the legendary Lenin icebreaker. It now stands against the wall and is used as a hotel.

We arrived, jumped with a parachute all together, both swimmers and paratrooper pilots. We made 7 jumps and realized: the task is daunting.

There are very strong winds in the sea area, and the landing areas on the ship are very limited. In addition, there are zones of low pressure and the parachute falls into a "stall". They manage very

difficult. 104

Therefore, we decided to entrust the landing to the best - the master of sports, the winner of the championship of the Union in parachuting Konstantin Ustyuzhanin and the candidate master Pavel Rogov. **Parachutist:** - The sailors met us

very well. They

took a steam bath. We lived near the airfield, in one of the villages. You know, there they have "Murmash - one", "Murmash - two" ... We lived in one of these Murmash. It's good that they arrived in advance, two weeks before the exercises. For the conditions

there were not quite normal. Near the harsh sea, the wind. In general, we worked, got used to the winds. They gave us a naval aviation helicopter.

Combat swimmer: - There were considerable problems with scuba diving. And in

The first is radiation. We were immediately warned: guys, the water here is bad. They took samples. The background is elevated - 25 milliroentgens. And the norm. 12-14. After swimming in such

water, it is necessary to do degassing, that is, cut and burn our rubber suits. And who will buy us new ones, and indeed, how to write them off? In a word, a lot of problems. **Parachutist:** - "Siberia" was standing at the pier, and at first it seemed that

this would make our work easier. But it was not there. On the contrary, such an arrangement of the ship introduced considerable difficulties. The fact is that they have a peculiar pier. The mooring wall itself is quite wide, there is loading, unloading, and then there are some containers, coils, coils, wire. A lot of things are screwed up. At the pier is an icebreaker. And almost next to it - a sheer wall. Apparently, there was a hill, it was hewn during construction. Thus, on the one hand, there is a lot

of space, and on the other, a cliff, a wall going up. Having crossed the ridge, the hill smoothly, slowly descends into the valley. **Combat swimmer:** - But what to do, the water is bad, the radiation is high, and the exercises are approaching. We began to move away from the parking of ships along the shore of the bay and train as part of a group. Frankly, with their

swims, they greatly

surprised the diving brethren. They worked without ligaments, in pairs.

Came to this by experience. Got it: physiology stronger than us. Someone swims faster, someone slower, so

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here they were not tied with a rope. We go together, insuring each other. Well, for professional divers it was wonderful, in violation of all instructions. As a result, the time has

come to make a decision: are we going or not going?

But if we do not go, the meaning of the teachings is lost.

And then, to our misfortune, a cargo ship "Serebryanka" was driven to the "Siberia". He takes nuclear waste to Novaya Zemlya. The background of this "Serebryanka" is 145 milliroentgens per hour. And all

we did go.

Parachutist: -

On the day of the exercise, the weather was difficult. And we also took portable radios with us, decided to contact the helicopter and the ground team. But it turned out that the landing was so heavy that it was no longer up to radio communications.

We jumped from a helicopter and went to the parking area of the ship captured by the "terrorists". And the ship behind the hill. And now you fly from the ravine to the top of the hill. Lower, lower, lower, and it seems that you are about to catch your feet on the ridge, the earth is very close, the wind is strong, it blows so that it turns your back and suddenly ... I crossed the top and it was completely calm. There is a cliff under you, depth, somewhere far below the ship, the parachute falls into the shading zone and the most unpleasant thing begins, in the language of paratroopers this is called the "stall" mode. The parachute "throws" ... **Combat swimmer:**

- We had an 8-meter duralumin ladder with us, made with our own hands. After all, the height of the side of the nuclear icebreaker is more than eight meters. Aircraft carrier only higher.

Of course, I read, saw in the movies fantastic ways to get on board the ship - some kind of magnetic, vacuum suction cups. But all this is far from reality.

In a word, we went under the "Serebryanka", sank under the water and began to move towards the icebreaker. It would seem that the task is simple, as in a school textbook, to get from point "A" to point "B". But that's just in the textbook. And then there is a huge amount of metal around, the arrow is spinning in a circle like crazy. Where to sail? **Parachutist:** - We are going in the "stall"

mode. I just feel that the dome is falling back, I add speed to it, just went forward - you pull back like a hot horse. And just like on a knife blade, you balance.

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You can't "fall off". Otherwise, the speed will increase, and when landing, you will inevitably break your arms and legs. In this case, what kind of fighter are you with "terrorists"?

In general, despite all the difficulties, they landed, connected with the ground group and began to act according to the exercise plan: they liberated the cabins from the "terrorists". Combat swimmer: -

Well, we had another compass, with a plastic body. He did help. Oriented.

We pass under the bottom of the ship, I could not even stand it, I stroked the icebreaker from below, under the belly.

They surfaced. From the first time it was not possible to hang the ladder. Not so easy. The captain then wondered for a long time how we managed to climb aboard at all.

We climbed up. Have piled up.' After all, if I rise alone, what good am I. Therefore, there are secrets of "accumulation" in order to then hit the whole group at the same time. Hit. Together with the ground crew and paratroopers, they freed the hostages and the ship from the "terrorists".

These are such unusual exercises in which various specialists from the Vympel unit were involved. In addition to the "militants", operatives also worked. They are using their methods penetrated the base of the nuclear icebreaker fleet.

SHOULD BE BORN OPERA?

The well-known Soviet intelligence officer Rudolf Abel once said in an interview with journalists: "Intelligence is work. Very difficult and dangerous. This is a constant improvisation of the mind ... The main thing in the work of a scout is the time when it is quiet and calm around him, and he, outwardly inconspicuous to anyone, does his state business, living simultaneously two lives - his own and the one given to him by legend - having for these two lives one heart, one nervous system, one supply

vital forces, and when his main and formidable weapon is the mind. First of all, mind.

In a short confession about what is most important in the work of a scout, Abel talks about the heart, nerves, vitality and mentions the mind three times. 107

Yes, the success of any scout is based on the work of the mind. On it, as on a foundation, an accurate calculation is based, the ability to outplay the enemy in conjunction with operational experience.

It just so happened that initially the roll in the training of the Vympel fighters was made in the direction of combat training. Probably, Afghanistan left its mark here, and objectively, not every intelligence officer can become an operative.

Mastering any military profession, especially as required by the laws of a special reconnaissance and sabotage unit, is not easy. It takes years, and sometimes all life.

But to become a classy "opera" you need something more than desire, knowledge of the laws of operational activity, and experience in this work.

What is "something more"? They say it's talent. "Opera" must be born - some say. "Operas" are not born, but become - say others.

It seems to me that both opinions are valid. Indeed, out of the thousands of people who have devoted themselves to the cause of protecting security in the image of the these units somehow unknown Fatherland, are crystallized, bearing a very honorable title among professionals - operational workers. And it's not a matter of the specifics of basic education (although it has never been superfluous), because one can recall many examples when the "opera" by education turned out to be business executives or personnel officers. At the same time, I do not want to offend either the rear or staff workers. They have their own very important and necessary concerns. But it's not about them now. It would seem that Rudolf Abel (Fischer in his youth), an excellent radio game master, head of the radio service of the 4th reconnaissance and sabotage directorate, has a different specialization than the head of the residency. However, Abel became famous as a major illegal intelligence agent, the head of our intelligence network in Western Europe.

And the amazing transformation of the legendary Nikolai Kuznetsov, a native Russian, from the Urals, into the German Ober Lieutenant Paul Siebert, his fantastically daring and, at the same time, accurately calculated actions of retaliation speak of a unique fusion of the talent of an operative and a militant in one person. Once I told my friend, a professional translator from German, about Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov, an illegal intelligence

agent who worked under the guise of a wealthy German 108

baron. The translator, who knew Germany well and had served there for a good ten years, was indescribably surprised, asking: "How

could it be? I know Germans. A German baron and a Russian guy from an ordinary family... Fantastic!"

Perhaps a fantasy and at the same time - a reality. It was they, General Drozdov, later the head of our illegal intelligence, Colonel Savintsev, deputy commander of the Vympel group, who taught the fighters of the unit the intricacies of operational work. In accordance with his position, Evgeny

Alexandrovich

Savintsev was engaged in these "wisdom" every day.

He managed to "capture" the Great Patriotic War, fought enough after May 1945 with gangs of fascist henchmen, and forty years later got into another war - the Afghan one, replaced Lazarenko at the Cascade. So Savintsev had a tremendous operational experience. Until now, "Vympel" remember his lessons. "In Vympel," Yevgeny

Alexandrovich once said, "they worked hard with the officers. It was real learning. We experimented all the time. Searched. It is important that the light of interest does not go out. And it looks like we succeeded." Admiral Khmelev, Colonel Savintsev taught: thought must go ahead. So, in fact, it was. Recently, in a conversation

with Vympel's chief of staff and other employees, we discussed the problem of the relationship between thought and

action. In other words, the share of operational and combat work in the conduct of a special operation. We argued for a long time. Someone said that the alignment here is 60 percent to 40, someone believed that the operational work takes all 90 percent, the combat work is only 10.

No consensus has yet been reached. It seems to me that this is not so important - 60 percent or all 90 are given to the operational study of the operation. Pleased with something else - the very understanding of the problem and priorities. Although in

fairness it should be noted: the peak of the "operational form" of "Vympel" is behind, in the past, the best "opera" - in civilian life. And this, alas, is not my opinion. This is the opinion of the majority of both current and retired employees. The current leadership, headed by General Vladimir

Egorovich Pronichev does a lot to return

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unit a high level of professionalism. However, this is not easy to do.

The "losses" of the group in the course of thoughtless perturbations, reorganizations, resubmissions are great. And the specificity of the division is such that only years will help to educate a new generation of professionals. I remember that Vympel veteran Sergei

Protsenko told me an interesting story. A few months after the events of October 1993, the authorities,

reluctantly, awarded several members of the group with medals. In the Kremlin, after the presentation, Protsenko had a remarkable conversation with one of the high-ranking generals of the Main Security Directorate.

The general, although he presented the medals, did not hide his dissatisfaction with the actions of the group in the White House. "Yes, you should all be chopped with checkers, and not rewarded," the general

allegedly joked. - Well, you will chop, but where will you get others to go under the bullets? "Ah..." the general waved his hand, "Russia is great, we will find it." Russia is really great, but it turns out that it is not easy to find, grow, train, educate a professional for Vympel. And especially a professional operative.

Today, remembering the good old days, Vympel workers emphasize one idea: it was interesting to work. "And what is this interest?" I once asked the head of a

division department. I knew that he was an excellent fighter, skydiving a lot and skillfully, he mastered mountaineering skills. It would seem that this is what we are talking about, but Lieutenant Colonel Nikolai Leonidov (surname changed) started talking about something completely different.

"Isn't it interesting, under the legend that you developed, tested, to penetrate a secure enterprise? Well, for example, to an aircraft factory? Yes, how much ingenuity, precise calculation, acting

skills, if you like, you need to have in order to go to a secret factory under the guise of a scientific worker from Moscow. Taking into account, of course, that not fools work there either, and they have their own security, their own pass regime. It was not easy for Nikolai, because according to legend he was a scientist in aircraft radio equipment. Try to have a professional conversation with people who know this equipment from a closed

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with our eyes. Nevertheless, the "Vympel" did not blunder, he managed to find out the secrets without revealing himself.

Nikolai Leonidov recalled these exercises with pleasure. Difficult but creative work done. Another employee of the

unit, Igor Bayukov, spoke about the exercises, during which the reconnaissance and sabotage group was to capture the secret carrier. An experienced worker of the local KGB acted as a secret carrier. Warned in advance about the capture, he took enhanced precautions, tried to calculate in advance the actions of saboteurs. Failed. The capture was so unexpected that the secret bearer surrendered immediately, recognizing the professionalism of the "Vympelites".

There have been many such exercises. I will not be mistaken if I say that in the "archive" of each employee there are "favorite" teachings. And most often they are connected with the work of the mind, with the search, with an

interesting thing. Of course, there are also classics. Although I know, many "Vympel" do not think so. Here, perhaps for the first time, I dare to disagree with them. Isn't penetration into the super-closed Arzamas-16 operationally the pinnacle of operational creativity? And the exit to the base of the icebreaker fleet in Murmansk under the guise of high and wealthy foreign guests during the exercises

"Blockade-93"?

Representatives of the "Arab sheikhs" came to the leadership of the base and proposed a fantastic project - the charter of a nuclear icebreaker for a trip to the North Pole. Remember the year 1993, rapid inflation, rising prices, the icebreaker fleet was abandoned by the state, in fact, to the mercy of fate, and here are the "sheikhs" who are ready to pay mind-boggling amounts in hard currency. How can you not believe it?

Yes, and solid representatives ... As you might guess, Vympel operatives acted as personal representatives of the "sheikhs". One of the participants in these

exercises told me how the "envoys of the Arab Emirates" from Balashikha stocked the refrigerator with fruit, treated the guests to a glass of exquisite cognac, and in the evening they took out porridge ... But these were already working moments that no one knew about.

The main thing is that the "messengers" were believed, and the leadership of the base is ready was to sign a contract. It is a pity that he did not take place.

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A trip to the North Pole would be wonderful. You could say historical. However, this operation went down in the history of Vympel as an excellent example of high operational art.

COLT FOR JORGE

They say that the almighty Chairman of the KGB, Yuri Andropov, after reading the famous novel by Vladimir Bogomolov "The Moment of Truth", ordered to find documents, and most importantly - Did you want intelligence "Smershevites" heroes books. officers - to meet the chief of the KGB with these amazing people, whether to reward? Don't know.

What was Andropov's surprise when he was informed that there were no heroes as such in reality, the author's fantasy was to blame.

Well, perhaps just such as in the novel did not exist, there was no Alekhine, Tamantsev, Blinov. However, there were certainly others. And the talented author brought together, in these three, the features of hundreds of fearless counterintelligence officers.

For the "Smershevites" front-line soldiers told me that they knew such cleaners as Tamantsev, who mastered the art of "shooting in the Macedonian way" - on the move with two pistols - and who knew how to "swing the pendulum".

Remember, as in Bogomolov, when the story comes from the name of Yevgeny Tamantsev, the "cleaner and wolfhound", nicknamed "Skorokhvat". "To intimidate,

to put pressure on the psyche, I immediately "tickled his ears": I fired a single shot from both revolvers so that the bullets passed tightly with his head -

it's impressive.

To make it difficult for him to aim, I continuously "swinged the pendulum": I danced with my left shoulder forward, jerkily

moving the body from side to side and moving all the time himself - something similar, only easier, is done by a boxer in the ring.

He fired two bullets at me, didn't hit me, added one more after a second and missed again. Something, but how to "swing the pendulum", I could teach both him and those who prepared him in Germany, besides, Pasha's shots from the side, no doubt,

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got on his nerves, and the backlight significantly reduced accuracy.

Nevertheless, he was an experienced, resourceful guy who immediately realized that I was more dangerous than others and that first of all it was necessary to deal with me ...

The barrel of the Browning again followed my movements - from right to left and back, and I felt, I knew that in the next second a shot would be heard again. As you know, the "cleaner" Tamantsev and

fighting friends won this difficult duel, destroying the hardened fascist spy - the legendary Mishchenko, who was transferred to Soviet territory more than fifty times in twenty years, and arresting his henchmen.

This became possible also because the counterintelligence officers, and especially Tamantsev, were fluent in weapons and acted swiftly, clearly, and skillfully during fire contact. Frankly, I re-read Bogomolov's book more than once and

wondered: where are they, the modern Tamantsevs? I knew scouts, counterintelligence officers and officers of military special forces. I saw them at exercises, shooting.

What kind of "shooting in Macedonian" is there, what kind of "swing of the pendulum"? Feet shoulder-width apart, a monumental stance with a pistol on an outstretched arm, counting holes in the target and indescribable joy if 23 is knocked out of the "thirty possible"

points.

Where did it all go? Who and when wrote these wild instructions on firing a Makarov pistol. Where, in what fight, what opponent will give you the opportunity to stand with your feet shoulder-width apart? . So, it was necessary to look for something else,

other approaches to teaching shooting. Many people understood this, but ... years, decades passed, and an officer with a pistol in the rack could become a monument, like a "girl with an oar" in her time. Yes, a special forces soldier must be able to do a lot. Thus, an employee of the American Delta,

according to its creator, Colonel Charles Beckwith, is obliged to exercise command and manage the security service, competently move from one position to another, using equipment during assault operations, manage hostages, quickly establish an identity, determine the point of one's standing, move across the terrain, overcome natural and artificial obstacles, protect hostages from the threat of use 113

explosives, know the tactics of the airborne troops, manage tracked and wheeled vehicles.

And also be able to descend from buildings, structures, aircraft, carry out the evacuation of the wounded, master single climbing, climbing in a bundle, install and use traverse cable attachment systems. This listing can be continued. Our fighters of the

"A" group and the "Vypel" unit know and are able to do just as well as their counterpart in the special forces. However, in all the variety of specialties there is something important,

defining, without which it is unthinkable to imagine a special forces soldier. And this is, first of all, the ability to wield weapons,

fire.

In any country, thousands and thousands of people deal with weapons: police, army, security forces, guards, bodyguards, hunters...

But special forces learn to use weapons in specific conditions. Unlike, for example, the army or the police, special forces soldiers always work in a hard mode of ammunition shortage. How much can you take with you in the conditions of deep reconnaissance, when the separation from your forces is hundreds of kilometers.

Therefore, in Vypel they were accustomed to the idea that automatic shooting, in principle, is contraindicated for special forces. And this has its rational grain. A small group of scouts cannot fight a long battle. And if the saboteurs were forced to shoot, then every shot should be for sure. For, as they told me in Vypel, a miss is a bullet from there, a bullet into you. However, requirements are requirements, but how to teach fighters to shoot

accurately, effectively, not in words, but in deeds? For the first time in practice, "real shooting" "Vypel" saw in Cuba. The senior

coach of the Russian shooting team Kudryashov, who was on the island at that time, advised them to get acquainted with Jorge. The guys denied for a long time, they had already seen the shooting of the Cubans and, frankly, it seemed to be the pinnacle of shooting art. And now, all of a sudden, some Jorge, a Nicaraguan, what can he teach the Russian special forces, and even those who have been trained by the Cubans?

However, the coach insisted. Go. We met two Nicaraguans, Jorge and Luisoim.

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A former employee shares his experience
"Vypel" Valery Kiselev:

"Jorge is small, but the Colt is big. He takes out a weapon starts shooting and that's it... our jaw dropped.

Well, what can I say, he pulls out a colt, instantly cocks it, hits all targets, while holes are in a pile, reloads the weapon and at the same time constantly moves ... Fits in 2 - 3 seconds. Fantastic. We say: "That's it, that's it, we don't need anything,

we only learn to shoot! Show!"

This is a different principle, a different approach to teaching shooting and shooting in general. When we mastered it, it was as if we stepped from school to the fifth year of the institute. The fact is that the

Americans analyzed ten thousand cases of the use of weapons by the FBI, the police, and special forces. The experience of gangster, mafia showdowns was also taken into account here. And it turned out that most often the opponents fired at a distance of 3 to 7 meters. Only. So you need to learn to shoot from such a distance. Who needs this standard stand and the 25 meters laid down according to our instructions? But when shooting at these short distances, everything happens

otherwise.

I remember that we returned home, learned to shoot, memorized, sketched. We begin to show: the guys understand, the management does not understand. You are supposed to shoot each other. Maybe. And if we are shot down in a combat situation? OK. I did

demonstration classes. Some boss came from the "nine", from the "A" group, from the "seven". Come on, show me.

And I already understood before that that it is useless to explain anything, they will not understand and will not believe. Yes, how can you believe it. If everything that he knew, what he studied, flies into hell. The distance is only 5 meters. Not that you shoot, throw a gun at a target - you won't miss. Well, I did not prove it - they arranged a

competition. We agreed as follows: these three targets are mine, and this one is yours. So, I strike three, you three of me alone. On command, they must get pistols and hit the targets. Begin. The colonel from the "nine" himself commands. When you command yourself, it seems like it turns out faster. Okay, we know these things, command, colonel.

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commanded. I have already laid all three targets, and they only raised their hands with weapons to shoot. Well, their jaws, like ours back in Cuba, have fallen off. "If you're interested, I'll teach," he told them. -

Interesting.

Well, we sat down and began to talk.

In his story, the Vympel employee forgot to clarify a very interesting detail: he managed to hit each target with two shots. I emphasize: two! This is the secret of shooting "bam-bam", as the special forces call it. The unit successfully mastered this unique shooting. And how else can you call it, if the worst

employees in 7 seconds, the best in 4 seconds on command managed to get a weapon, load it and hit 12 targets. But since there are 8 cartridges in the store, it means that during this time they also changed

shop.

In a word, in a matter of seconds, having drawn their weapons, they killed 12 Human. At the same time, they were moving all the

I must say that the What time ... the creative thought of the fighters Vympel special forces were looking for in many types of shooting

something of their own, only inherent in them.

After all, they invented essentially a new way of firing a grenade launcher. Authorship is attributed to several fighters, so I will not name anyone specifically, but I will only tell you about the most important thing.

Apparently, this "rationalization proposal" was forced by Afghanistan itself. "Vympel" faced an insoluble problem: with the illiteracy and ignorance of their wards Afghans. This story was told to me like this. "I arrived in Afghanistan. I'm doing classes. Here is the mortar. "The North is destined," I say. What is the North? They have zero education.

Okay, did you shoot a gun? Shot. Here is a mortar tube - a gun. I take a step forward and lower the tube of the grenade launcher onto my outstretched hand. The length of

the arm is unchanged. The assistant lowers the mine. See where you fell? What if you change the angle? Yeah, it's clear ... "This method was often used later in Afghanistan. It took root and was distributed among the Afghans. "Necessity for invention is cunning," the "Vympelovtsy" laughed.

And they knew the price of this ancient folk wisdom.

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POLYGLOTS FROM "VYMPEL"

Every profession has its secrets. To an uninitiated person, the subtleties of craftsmanship may seem

little things.

However, often a professional judges himself like by "little things". And it immediately becomes clear who is worth what.

At a press conference on the results of the anti-terrorist operation in Pervomaisky, two ministers spoke: the Interior Minister Kulikov and the Federal Security Service Barsukov. One of the generals then complained: they say, the Chechen terrorists left barefoot across the muddy, viscous field, throwing off their boots. It was felt throughout that for the general such a method of movement was a novelty.

"A trifle," someone will think. Perhaps, but the terrorists, on whose conscience more than a dozen innocent souls were killed, left. Not all, of course. Fortunately, at one of the sites they were met by a small group of army special forces. And she laid many forever in this damp earth. There are no trifles in spetsnaz business. This rule is taught in reconnaissance and

sabotage units, as they say, from an early age. Wrong point in the documents can cause the failure of the agent, an inadvertently broken branch will lead the pursuers to the reconnaissance group's day. I remember that one of the KGB generals told me how, before the entry of our troops into Czechoslovakia, he saw security officers dressed as if brand new in a new military uniform. And this is against the

background of worn, washed out

gymnasts of soldiers and army officers. Someone made a clear miscalculation. "They will immediately calculate you ..." - the general drew the attention of his subordinates.

As for the escape of terrorists barefoot, Colonel Yevgeny Savintsev, an experienced intelligence officer, former deputy commander of Vympel, only grinned: "I taught my soldiers this back in forty-five. On command, with one wave of the foot, they were supposed to throw off their boots. Otherwise, you won't run away and you won't catch up with anyone, boots on viscous virgin soil instantly become poods from adhering dirt. This wisdom was known to me even by first-year fighters. The ability to calculate the situation in advance, to foresee all the vital details is an

invariable feature of a professional intelligence officer-saboteur.

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Think April 24, 1980. The American sabotage unit "Delta" takes place in the planes. The weapons were shot, cleaned, knives sharpened.

The fighters are dressed in jeans, high army boots and black body armor. On the right sleeve of each fighter is sewn a sleeve badge with the image of the American flag. As long as it's sealed with tape. On his head is a dark blue Navy hat. And no insignia.

At 18:00, the first plane with a group of Delta employees will take off from the Egyptian airfield. Their path lies over the Gulf of Oman to Iran. There, terrorists seized the American embassy, and Delta was tasked with releasing

hostages.

"Thoughts swirled in my head," writes the commander of the Delta, Colonel Charles Beckwith, in his memoirs. - What awaits us ahead, what will we face on the streets of Tehran? Perhaps with some new obstacle that we have not taken into account. Will all the hostages be in the office? Can the Soviet SPAAGs with their devastating

23mm cannons take out the Delta team as long as they stay in the stadium? How many helicopters will be out of action tomorrow night? Halfway to the desert, I was informed that all eight helicopters had taken off. The operation has begun. I beamed. How many people can do what I did? To pick up a

team, starting almost from scratch, create a unit that is the best in the American army, and then raise it and lead it into battle.

Beckwith's pride is understandable. Indeed, it was he who stood at the origins of the Delta, he overcame all bureaucratic barriers and assembled, nurtured a completely new unit for the US Army. Now the colonel was leading them into the first battle.

The fight was difficult and risky. As you know, the Americans lost it. Operation Eagle Claw ended in failure.

I have often asked myself why this happened? The official version, by the way, expressed by Beckwith himself, is as follows: the helicopters that failed on the way are to blame for everything

to Tehran.

Yes it is. According to the calculations of the specialists who developed the operation, for its successful implementation it was necessary to have eight serviceable helicopters. And Beckwith in the paragraph "Desert-1" has them

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there were only five. And then he decided: "Cancel the operation. The Delta is flying home." But after all, the main

tragedy occurred after this team. Here is how Beckwith describes it.

"The Delta team has begun loading

onto aircraft. I went from one plane to another, noting in my mind the number of people who boarded each one. I quickly made my way to the lead aircraft. Time was 2.40. Some pilots started the engines

of their cars to warm them up. Dust whirlwinds swirled everywhere, visibility was practically zero. I want to focus on these words of Colonel Beckwith. Here lies the key to the whole

tragedy. "Because of zero visibility," one of the helicopters taxiing to a gas station collided

with the last EU-130 aircraft. Fortunately, the fighters of the Blue group (Delta division) managed to escape by running out of the plane engulfed in flames. The secret of the tragedy was revealed to me by the same Colonel Savintsev. After all, it is hardly worth convincing anyone that the Americans did not understand where they were flying. To the desert Moreover, they trained hard in the sandy areas of the country, in

Florida. The training took a total of several months. It would seem that everything has been calculated. They missed one "little thing": the sand in the Iranian desert was completely different in composition than on the beaches of Florida. There, helicopters took off without raising a cloud of dust.

In Iran, it was different: malfunctioning helicopters and a sandstorm raised by the blades of machines buried hopes for the success of the operation. Several helicopters burned down, a tanker aircraft, 8 people died. "It was almost three in the

morning," Beckwith would later write. - After staying on the ground for 3 hours 46 minutes, Delta left the Desert-1 point. With the first rays of the sun we flew over

the Gulf of Oman. The operation ended in complete failure. After a colossal investment of time and nerves, labor and sweat, everything turned out to be in vain. In this story, only one thing is captivating: Beckwith was not afraid

take responsibility and cancel the operation. Although I knew

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that the president himself is monitoring its progress. Yes, 8 people died, but more could die, the Delta commander tremble, do not show firmness, be cowardly.

Brzezinski later confessed to Beckwith that he had been at the President's side during their flight to Iran, and when the Delta commander asked for permission to stop the operation, he almost persuaded Carter to continue.

What do you think would be the consequences if was this decision made? Brzezinski asked Beckwith.

"It would be a disaster," the Colonel replied. And our conversation would not have taken place. "I have

repeatedly thought about this issue," Beckwith will later say, "and deep down I knew that if I had received an order to continue the operation, I would not have carried it out, citing radio interference and poor reception." Alas, on the eve of the Chechen massacre, no one referred to

radio interference and poor reception.

Thousands of untrained boys in military overcoats, thousands of civilians perished.

But that's a topic for another conversation.

Returning to the problem of professionalism and subtleties in the work of a saboteur, it is impossible not to notice how thoughtfully they approached this matter in their time in the state security agencies.

So, for example, a group of Zenit employees that stormed Kabul radio and television in December 1979 was headed by Anatoly Ryabinin, a television engineer. His task was not only to take control of the information services of the capital, but also to ensure their further uninterrupted work. Which, in fact, was done. From one of the studios captured by Ryabinin's group, Babrak Karmal's well-known appeal to the people of Afghanistan sounded.

The Vympel fighter, Lieutenant Colonel Erkebek Abdulaev, worked during the exercises under the guise of a livestock specialist who came from another region. To collect intelligence, he visited the local department of agriculture, led an interested conversation with colleagues on the problems of livestock technology. This did not arouse suspicion in anyone, because before joining the state security agencies, Abdulaev graduated from the agricultural institute.

In general, education in the first specialty, as they say in "Vympel", the case is very interesting. Such diversity

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professions are unlikely to be found anywhere under one roof. There are TV and nuclear workers, teachers and tank crews, border guards and livestock specialists, lawyers and trainers.

And it is difficult to enumerate the universities in which the future "Vympel" students studied. The range is great. From the provincial pedagogical institute to the elite Academy of the General Staff and to the world-famous Sorbonne.

When, after the events of August 1991, Vympel was redirected from reconnaissance and sabotage activities to the fight against nuclear terrorism, nuclear engineers appeared in the unit.

Seriously treated in "Vympel" to the development of foreign languages. Of course, the family is not without its black sheep, there were those who never mastered the "foreign language". And language lessons were worse than punishment for them. But the majority used this opportunity, which, by the way, helps them to adapt more successfully to the new civil society.

life.

So, the former fighter of the special forces Anatoly Yermolin

now runs the college. When I asked where he had learned his second language, Spanish, Anatoly Alexandrovich kindly remembered his "Vympelov" teachers of a foreign language.

The unit also had its own polyglots, who mastered four, five languages, and sometimes very rare dialects. I don't know if this is true, but they say that an employee served in Vympel, who was almost the only connoisseur in the country of the language of a small endangered African tribe. These unique professionals were owned by the special forces. United by

a single goal into a strong fighting family, it itself has become unique, one of a kind. However, that is now history.

A history to be proud of.

"LINK" IN ... MIA

The October events of 1993 in Moscow are a tragedy for our people. For Vympel, these are their terrible days. Without them, the fate of the unique unit would have been very different.

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"Alpha" was more famous, they were afraid to touch it. Although they say that the president every time even at the occasional mention of group "A" fell into a bad mood.

Already on October 6, he signed a decree on the dismissal of the commander of Group A, General Gennady Zaitsev, to the reserve. However, this decree did not see the light, they say, there was a smart adviser in the presidential environment, who suggested that now is not the time to raise an extra fuss. And the general was left in rest.

True, the disgraced "Alpha" was removed from the protection of the president, and on the twenty-year anniversary, the name of its boss, the same Zaitsev, who gave the group no less than a decade and a half, was absent from the lists of awardees.

With "Vympel" they acted simply. Amazingly simple. The elite state security unit, which had been preparing for twelve years to work abroad, where the best forces of operatives and militants of the country were gathered, was transferred to the police.

I want to be understood correctly: I do not dare to oppose the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the state security agencies. Both services are urgently needed, necessary and worthy of respect and support. However, they are

different systems. Each of them has its own specific tasks, and an elite special forces soldier who speaks foreign languages and operational skills should not perform the duties of an riot policeman. This has never happened before in the world. Yes, just us

the world, we ourselves with a mustache.

The decision of the country's top leadership to "surrender" the intelligence elite to the Ministry of Internal Affairs caused a storm of indignation in the unit. The fighters left by the

dozens. Military experts believe that if the unit left on

for some reason, 30 percent of the personnel - it is on the verge of losing combat capability, if 40 percent - is practically incompetent. But this is in an ordinary military unit, and what can we say about special forces, where each soldier is worth a platoon. And to prepare it, we need not months - years, decades. Vypmel was prepared for 12 years and destroyed overnight. The Vypmel commander, General Dmitry Gerasimov, also refused to serve under the police banner. Interior Minister Yerin was offended: "Of course, you are white-collar workers, but we are laborers."

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Why did they deal with Vypmel so cruelly? Truth still not told to the world.

Without a doubt, Group A and Vypmel accomplished a civic feat. They stopped the bloodshed, saved people. However, not such a feat, apparently, was

expected from them.

authorities.

When meeting with direct participants in those events, I often ask myself the question: how is a historical lie born? How to protect historical truth?

I had to do this in 1991. Remember the scary articles, the newspaper headlines of those days, and among them a whole series of reports about infantry fighting vehicle number 536. The most common of them is "BMP number 536 is a killer."

Immediately after those events, I visited the prosecutor's office, in the division near Moscow, where this ill-fated "bempeshka" came from. With the officers of the division, we again and again drew the route of the movement of the BMP, calculated the movement of the column by the minute. We went to the place again, conducted a kind of our own investigative experiment.

I will not re-describe those events and conclusions on them, especially since, in hot pursuit, I have already described everything in an article under the heading "Was the BMP-536 a killer?" I think that in my investigation I proved that the BMP-536, like other vehicles of this convoy, did not go to the White House. On this road, they simply could not get there. But the worst thing that struck me was the

meeting with the "killer crew" of the BMP-536. Exhausted by showdowns, frightened by interrogations, harassed by meetings with high "democratic officials", they looked at my lieutenant colonel's epaulets with fear in their eyes.

It took a long time to convince these innocent guys that I was not from the White House, not from the KGB, counterintelligence and prosecutors. And yet, when I managed to somehow talk to them, the BMP driver, with tears in his eyes, extended his burnt, blue-red hands to me. He was pulled out of the BMP, doused with gasoline and set on fire. This is what the truth turned out to be. But the most amazing thing is that these guys, who were called

"stranglers of democracy", had never

been to Moscow before that ill-fated night, and that such a White House exists, they found out on

the next day from the mouth of the investigator.

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Outraged by all this, I wrote an article and tried to defend the historical truth. The article contrasted sharply with the wild howl of the newspaper. I went around a good dozen respected national newspapers - no one undertook to publish it. The only daredevil was found - Nikolai Modestov from Podmoskovnye Izvestiya. He typed. Thanks to him, of course. Although I am well aware of the futility of their attempts. My article is a subtle squeak, not noticed by anyone.

That's the whole truth. A low bow to the investigator, who was not afraid to conduct an unbiased investigation. Otherwise, the soldiers, who did not even know the name of the White House, would still rot in prison as "murderers" and "stranglers of democracy." However, the investigator, who dared to tell the true truth, and not a lie that was beneficial at that moment to the so-called "democrats", was covered in mud from head to toe in the press. That is why I want only one thing - that the actions of the Vympel unit in October 1993 be covered truthfully and honestly. And remained in the history of our Fatherland

such.

For I am sure that it is they who are worthy of the title of Heroes of Russia - the fighters of group "A" and "Vympel". And let these stars adorn other uniforms today - the people should know their true heroes. In order not to seem biased, the word

to them is the fighters of the Vympel unit, the direct participants in those events. Sergei Protsenko, former head of department of the Vympel division: — The

beginning was like this. At 3.15 am on October 4, the leadership of the Vympel and

Alfa units was invited to the President's office. Right there and Barsukov with Korzhakov. They sat down along the wall, opposite Yeltsin's table. He stepped in

front of us. It was evident from everything that Boris Nikolayevich was greatly agitated, in a state of nervous tension. I remember he said: "We must put an end to the red-browns, otherwise this bandit revelry will have irreversible consequences

for the country."

Maybe in some word I made a slight mistake, but I definitely vouch for the whole phrase.

We were all silent, we understood what they wanted from us. Yeltsin asked if there were any questions. Trying to somehow save the situation, Dmitry Mikhailovich Gerasimov said something about small forces.

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Yeltsin, already standing, snapped: "Enough strength." This was the end of our communication with the President. Then we talked with Korzhakov. And now let's imagine

the state of the commanders - the same Gerasimov, Zaitsev, and even those of a lower rank. The order was received from the first person of the state. It must be done

as written in the charters (read: laws for military people) "exactly and on time." Otherwise? Otherwise, depending on the situation ... - If, according to the laws of wartime, execution. If according to the laws of peace - a tribunal.

Often civilians, especially journalists, especially women who have never served in the army and perceive the word "order" in much the same way as a request from the head of a department, which can be easily dismissed, laughed off, are taken to judge people in uniform. And they judge, they don't condemn, but really judge, not understanding what a terrible choice these people face.

But, if you think objectively, without prejudice, the fighters of "Vympel" and "Alpha" had no choice in that truly tragic night.

To disobey an order is to shed a sea of blood. What does it mean in reality - "do away with the red-browns"? And that is what it means to end. Imagine for a moment the horror of that battle and the state after it. Who are they now, these "pros" of anti-terror? Are there terrorists in the White House?

Here are the questions for each of them. Terrible questions for which there is no answer. At first, they tried to find answers

to them from their immediate superiors - Generals Barsukov and Korzhakov. However, they soon realized they also did not know the answers. They know one thing: the president ordered. Well, they heard the order with their own ears. Although sometimes it seemed better to go deaf at that moment. Sergey Protsenko tells: - We came to the hall, here in the Kremlin, where we were located that night, we began

to think: what to do? I remember the ninety-first... Vilnius, Tbilisi...

And then, in the course of these heavy reflections, I realized: it is very difficult to find and train Alexander Matrosov. After all, we were not thinking about ourselves, no. How are we going to shoot our own people? Can't you find another solution? They were together with Alpha, they did

not share. We old people knew each other since 1979. Those who are younger - from the end

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80s. In Afghanistan, together, in "hot spots", consider, at the same time, they rushed about, joint exercises. So there was hiding

nothing.

In short, gathered, let's look for options. You can't go, you can't go, you can't go either. There were, of course, sharp statements from younger guys, saying that we were leaving, getting on buses and leaving for our places of deployment.

Still, somehow we were able to convince the majority that there is time, we must think, look for it. And most importantly, to convince the leadership in making another, bloodless decision.

We boarded buses, left the Kremlin, and stopped in a street near the General Staff. Barsukov drove up to us. They began to offer their options. Well, for example, shooting is heard from two sides.

Surround

The White House, we comb all the attics, roofs, rooms, and from there there is not a single shot. And from here, for its part, easier to stop the fire.

Alas, the proposals were rejected. There was one thing: you have to go, move forward and that's it. Then they said directly to Barsukov's face: we won't shoot. A very heavy impression was made by the actions of the

riot police in the area of the zoo. They brutally beat people... It didn't harden us, it had the opposite effect. This is how a fighter of an elite unit differs from an ordinary riot policeman. In my book on Group A, I cite dictaphone recordings of

radio conversations between the police and the White House. They were published at one time in Komsomolskaya

Pravda.

There, one policeman threatens on the air from those who are in the White House, "tear off the skin", "hang everyone on flagpoles", promises "not to take them alive." And all why? Another policeman answers this question: "There are only urks gathered there, there are no normal people there." Like this. He did not see those people in the eyes, but he was told: there

"cattle" and "urks", and he believed.

Now you can imagine what would have happened if Vympel and Alfa had not entered the White House before dark and brought the deputies and their supporters out of there. At night, riot police would enter there. The very ones who promised to tear off the skin. I think that the soldiers of the special forces understood this, looking at

riot police massacre at the zoo. 126

The word to Sergei Protsenko: - At

15 o'clock they began to advance to the White House. Shots rang out, people fell. We have seen that as the conflict drags on, the casualties will increase.

My department and I moved along the building to the main entrance. Five thousand people stood

outside the White House. No one could explain what kind of people they were - supporters of parliament or vice versa. Come closer, take a look. It became clear that these were not supporters of the White

House. From the looks, the exclamations could be understood: they are rushing there not with good intentions. Of course, there were also journalists and photojournalists. I had to pull the police out of the back rows, put them in front, and with their help they began to slowly, culturally push the crowd. They persuaded, they say, the bullets do not fly rubber.

They put up their cordon. I went up from the main entrance to the second floor. He did not enter the hall where the deputies were sitting, and began to ask them at the entrance, to persuade them to leave the White House. Then we went to the fourth floor to Rutskoi.

Officers came out to meet us with weapons, with machine guns. Backed up against the wall at first. I explained for seven minutes. Deputy Taranenko was right there. He took me to Rutskoi.

We talked for a long time with Rutskoi surrounded by deputies.

The situation is tense. They are nervous, I am nervous.

How could I convince: the sooner we leave, the sooner everything will end. The main thing is to get people out so that no one dies.

There were many questions, statements, they say, we did not fire, they want to shoot us. In other words, they didn't trust me. It

seems to me that the turning point occurred after Sozhi Umalatova said: "I believe this colonel."

I see that Rutskoi is leaning towards my proposal. This is how the Vypel and Alfa fighters worked in the White House: they persuaded, persuaded, gave guarantees that they were not authorized to. Anything happened: sometimes the

barrel of a pistol rested on the temple, and then the conversation began again. Calmly, gathering nerves in a ball. One of the Vypel fighters, Sergei Klimentiev, told me that when they left the White House, he checked the weapons of his subordinates. For the whole day his men did not fire a single shot. 127

However, as time has shown, persuading the defenders of the White House was half the battle. Persuaded, went down to the first floor, and then what? How now to provide to people the promised safety? Sergei Protsenko recalls: - Rutskoi, Khasbulatov and forty other people went down together

with us in the lobby of the first floor. And here the problems began.

I'm trying to contact by radio - it's not possible. I went down the stairs to the armored personnel carriers, got in touch with the commander of the "A" group, General Zaitsev. He introduced himself: "I am such and such, I went out into the lobby with Rutskoi, Khasbulatov, and other deputies. Gave security guarantees.

Zaitsev asked me to wait. Wait, no answer. Again incomprehensible questions, business by the evening. I'm trying to make jokes to lighten the mood. But people start asking me: where are the buses?

Every now and then, like fires, there were flashes of tension, shouting: "Let's not go! We will stand to the last!"

Went down a second time, asked for buses, escort armored personnel carriers. Soon

Korzhakov came up to us with a group of people. When he introduced himself, the crowd screamed and got excited. And then his guards rushed to search him. I had to abruptly stop this search, otherwise I don't know how it would have ended. Korzhakov asked: "Where is Barannikov, Makashov?" I

replied that only Khasbulatov and Rutskoi were with me. He gave the command to deliver them to Lefortovo. At this time, a transport arrived. They brought Makashov. I put him,

Khasbulatov, and Rutskoy on the bus, and Korzhakov entered with the guards.

When we were driving away from the White House, Khasbulatov saw people dancing through the window. They jumped and laughed. He asked: "What kind of people, why do they behave like that?"

I replied: "Probably happy." "They will regret it bitterly," Khasbulatov said.

Those were his only words. Rutskoi spoke a lot. That the military promised to support, called, expressed support, named names... And then they betrayed... 128

At the end he said: "Say hello to Gerasimov. I rescued him in Afghanistan." In Lefortovo, they were also met by "Vympelovtsy", accepted. Valery Kiselev remembered that evening so well: "Makashov refused to eat, went on a hunger strike, Khasbulatov freaked out, did not sleep at night, shaking, shouting: "Why is it so cold? Why isn't the blanket so warm? "Where are you, exactly? In prison".

That's how we descended to the jailers.

The last bitter phrase thrown by an employee "Vympel", I still can not get out of my head.

HOW WAS VEGA BORN?

One of the Vympel employees had a favorite joke. Arriving at the unit early in the morning, he greeted his colleagues: "Good evening!" "Well, what evening?" colleagues were amazed. "And as soon as I enter the OTC (a separate training center - the unit was legendary under this name), it's dark in my eyes." A very symbolic joke. When you find out what permutations and reforms the Vympel group underwent in its time, you understand: there is something to darken your eyes from.

First, Vympel was transferred from foreign intelligence to the Ministry of Security, later it was withdrawn from there and "seconded" to the Main Security Directorate. And finally, in January 1994, they were generally transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

The new police chief ordered the group to be renamed. Thus, Vega was born.

Today, it would seem, everything has returned to normal, "Vympel" again at the Lubyanka. Now this is Directorate "B" of the Special Purpose Center of the Federal Security Service.

Meeting with the soldiers of the special forces - former and current - I was convinced of the correctness of the ancient truth: how many people - so many opinions. Some believe that the current composition of the unit is the same Vympel, others say that there is no trace of the former group. I don't know who's right. Seems to me the names have changed

for good reason. The Vympel commander was Dmitry Gerasimov.

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"Vega" was headed by Valery Kruglov, and Vladimir Pronichev headed the Department "B". Now Pronichev is already a deputy. head of the FSB, and the unit is commanded by Sergei Ukolov.

We admit to ourselves: intelligence and sabotage are one thing, police concerns and the fight against crime are another. One

could understand the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, who would refuse a highly professional, mobile, well-coordinated,

divisions. And we must pay tribute, the new bosses treated Vega with attention and care.

However, there was a completely different reaction in the unit. The employees, in fact, revolted.

Most did not want to go under the banner of General Yerin. Well, this is quite understandable. After all, in the fall of 1993, Vympel largely remained the original OUC, which was created as an elite division of the Security Committee. It was inscribed on his battle banner: Special Forces Group of the KGB of the USSR. "Vympel" has become an auction. The retired officers were "taken apart" by firms, those who did not want to take off their

shoulder straps were "married" to intelligence, to the Security Service, to the Main Directorate of Security, to the Ministry of Emergency Situations. It happened that they left in whole squads.

When I asked one of the paratroopers, those who landed on the roof of the nuclear reactor, how many fighters were left in Vega from their "flight" squad, he answered with a sigh: no one. I think that even a person who is far from military affairs will understand what it means for the team when everyone leaves. Especially for the military. After all, it is not enough to gather professional masters, they still need to be nurtured, nurtured, and united in a combat unit. If everyone leaves, the unit dies. Fortunately, Vympel did not die. Of course, he lost a lot. But it is

important that he did not die. In fairness, we must admit that the new ministry also helped to survive. It did not leave "Running" in a lack of money, it treated the

problems of the group with understanding. She was provided with vehicles, ammunition, and weapons.

The most painful for "Vympel" was the question of the "object" under construction for many years. This complex of buildings and premises has been built today, it has everything for life and combat activities. 130

I confess: having visited the "object", I was shocked. Against the background of the general collapse, the "object" remained an oasis of creation. A wonderful swimming pool where combat swimmers train, a spacious shooting range for shooting from various weapons systems, a cozy library, a museum, a canteen, living quarters, classes for training employees.

Deputy Head of Directorate "V", a veteran of "Vympel" Vladimir Vladimirov (surname changed) told how much effort had to be invested in order to bring the "object" to mind. Much has been done by hand, through the efforts of the energetic deputy commander for logistics, Alexander Vasilyevich Kopchik.

But the most important thing is done. And thanks to the leadership of the Ministry of Internal Affairs for this - they found the money when Vympel became part of the

ministry. It is interesting that even the place for the construction of the "object" was not chosen by chance. Previously, there was a forest and a large clearing, where the fighters liked to relax, returning from work.

"Vympel". So to speak, the last halt in front of the house. Everyone knew: there were exactly 3 keme left, and there were native walls, a hot bath, rest. In a word, this glade over

the years has become a kind of talisman on the difficult path of Vympel. Therefore, when the question arose of where to deploy a new object, they chose this place. And I don't think they miscalculated. In essence, "Vympel" - "Vega" was in the staff of

the Ministry of Internal Affairs for a year and a half. And to be absolutely precise, in August 1995, by decree of the President, the unit was again returned to the FSB. Well, no one doubts today - it was the right decision. Everyone must do their job.

These one and a half years, when the group walked under police epaulettes, turned out to be extremely tense. December 1993 - the

capture by four armed criminals of 14 schoolchildren of the 9th grade of the 25th school in the city of Rostov-on-Don. July 1994 The tragedy broke out in Minvody. And it

began on the highway Pyatigorsk - Stavropol. The bandits seized the bus and made demands: weapons, dollars, a plane ready to take off. There were 40 hostages at gunpoint, including children.

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"Vega" flew to the Mineralnye Vody, where there was already a bus seized by terrorists. Due to departmental confusion, the Alpha group failed to take off on time on a TU 134 aircraft. The flight director did not find the commander

crew.

The commander of the aviation division placed at the disposal of the group the duty officer AN-27. When ammunition and special equipment were loaded on board, a new command was received - the AN-27 Air Force aircraft was replaced with a TU-134 aircraft.

"Alfovtsum" again had to be overloaded. Thus, when group "A" was late for the start of the operation, the head of the operational headquarters, Colonel-General A. Kulikov, decided not to use it. The entire burden of the combat mission fell on the Vega and

Police Rapid Response Team.

During the operation, there were dead among the hostages, injured employees of the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The

country did not yet know Budennovsk and Pervomaisky, the Chechen war, and the reaction to the victims of the helicopter assault was very negative. This was written a lot in the

press, the employees of the unit heard plenty of bitter reproaches. However, sadly to say, my colleagues, and myself, were far from the truth. There are many reasons for that. Among them is the notorious super-secrecy. Nevertheless, our writing brethren, in ardent accusatory articles, deeply offended the guys who exposed themselves to the bullets of terrorists.

That's why I'm late, but I want to apologize. before the major

militia Dmitry Kovalev, who still wears a fragment under his heart, in front of an employee of the Vega group Alexei Orlov and other fighters of that assault team.

But what actually happened then, in July 1994, on the airfield of the Minvoda airport? Says the participant of the assault,
an employee of the Office "B"

Alexander Evgeniev (surname changed):

"This time it was different than before. After all, this is not the first time we have traveled to the Mineralnye Vody. Usually, the police, troops of the Ministry of Defense are already working at the place of capture, the airport is cordoned off. And then they didn't have time to arrive, unload, there was confusion, running around. Commands: run there, run here, lie down so as not to be noticed.

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The bus with the terrorists began to suddenly move around the airfield. In general, the nervous situation, there was no clarity in the actions. There are only thirteen of us from

Vega. Commander, Deputy chief of staff, a doctor and ten soldiers. Information has passed: the terrorists are
demanding a helicopter. We

practiced on a helicopter, prepared it.

During the training, we exchanged views and agreed on one thing - you can't enter through the ramp from behind. This path of penetration is doomed to failure. The leadership

of the operation also understood this, and therefore the task was set: "to work on the terrorists" at the time of their transition from the bus to the helicopter.

In three groups, with the help of tractors, at high speed we they had to ram the bus and go on the assault. We were

asked about readiness, we confirmed - we are ready! After that, an incomprehensible pause. Suddenly, the helicopter engines started and I heard a conversation on the radio station: "What happened? Why are the terrorists in the helicopter?" We also have some

confusion, because we planned
work according to one scenario, but it turns out completely different.

However, there was not much time to think. The team sounded: "To the car!", Dismounted and ran along the fence to the helicopter. Calculations were made along the way. It was clear that the worst option falls to us. No one doubted that they would have to go on the assault. They knew that Dudayev warned: any helicopter that flies into the airspace of Chechnya will be shot down. How did the terrorists get in the helicopter, you ask? The chief intervened, completely uninvolved in the

operation. But he obeyed the crews of helicopters. Thus, he essentially thwarted the operation. But people, hostages, it was necessary

save.

And we went. The signal was the explosion of a light and sound grenade. Information

on the terrorists on board was very scarce. Numbers were called, either three or four people. How they are dressed, how they look, is also not clear. I remember they said, they say, one in white

shirt. That's all the signs. In a word, they opened the ramp, rushed forward with shouts. And to meet - distraught hostages, a wave of people.

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Imagine, a MI-8 helicopter and fourteen hostages. Screams, screams, crying. I'm being knocked off my feet. Sergei Karpov, who is walking ahead, also falls.

I see orange flashes inside the helicopter. I later realized that they were shooting at us. In general, the swiftness required for conducting a special operation, was lost.

The first thing I saw when I jumped into the helicopter was an outstretched hand with a gun. The terrorist was sitting on the floor, sideways to me. I managed to beat off his hand and pulled: the gun turned out to be mine.

Suddenly I see a bandit in the left palm - a grenade. shoot no I can: I will kill, and he will open his hand. And this is an explosion, dead, wounded.

I intercept his hands with my hands and press them to the floor. He breaks out. And then I was wounded in the leg, lost consciousness. When he woke up, he again tried to grab the terrorist by the arms and put the squeeze on. But the forces are not the same, I am swimming, my head is

spinning ... He broke free and threw a grenade to the side. The fuse went off. At this time,

the side door opened, the terrorist began to fall from a helicopter and I'm behind him. Grenades rained down on the ground.

And the grenade thrown by the bandit exploded under the tank of the car. There were four of us from the assault group in the helicopter, and all of them were seriously wounded.

Dima Kovalev from SOBR became disabled, his arm still does not work, a fragment under his heart. I broke two bones in my leg, I was lying with Elizarov's apparatus. Alexei Orlov was injured, we came from the academy with him, and Sasha Anichkov.

Later they wrote about 5.45 bullets from automatic weapons, and We didn't even have machine guns, only pistols.

The terrorists were sentenced to death, but they are still alive. The case was sent for investigation. Such is the terrible truth

about the once sensational operation in the Mineralnye Vody. However, how many of

them were later - and Budennovsk, and Kizlyar with Pervomaisky. In quiet Budyonnovsk, old

front-line soldiers thought that the Nazis had broken into the city. The same grin, the same bloodthirstiness - they shot "from the stomach", blew up houses, killed, drove civilians to the hospital.

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The area of operations was blocked by units of the Ministry of Internal Affairs and the Ministry of Defense. Two special forces, Alpha and Vega, went to storm the hospital. Attack "Vega" bogged down, but that's not her

guilt.

Here is the opinion of the fighter of group "A" sniper Vasily Denisov: - "Run" had an almost impossible task. If they went to the end, then such a unit would no longer exist.

They had to go through a completely open space about one hundred and fifty meters. The place was completely shot through by DShK (heavy machine gun), submachine gunners, and grenade launchers. Let the tank go there, and it would have been knocked out.

And they are living people, not in armor. How the operation in Budyonnovsk ended is

known throughout the country. Much has been written about this and I think it makes no sense to repeat it. I just want to add that the soldiers of the special forces did everything they could in this situation. The rest is demand from politicians. But as you know, bribes are smooth from them.

Pervomaisky also had a Vega. Together with "Alpha", "Vityaz", police special forces. In a word, in recent years, Vypmel - Vega has drunk its military cup to the bottom. But why only in recent years? It would be more accurate to say in the last decade. After all, all the "hot spots" of the Soviet Union, and then Russia, went through the Vypmel fighters. Were in Armenia, in Azerbaijan, in the Baltic States ... It is easier to list where they have not been. Among the first "Vypmelovtsy" were included in Chechnya. However

Chechnya is a special conversation.

WHO ARE YOU PROFI DIVERSIONS?

Writing about the people of the reconnaissance and sabotage service is like climbing to the top. Each of them is a rock, a monolith, a great moral height. Over the years of working in the press, life has brought

me to different people. But nowhere and never before have I met so many talents, nuggets, as here. 135

Yes, without a doubt, in the Soviet Union there was a "strong" selection for this service. But, I think, it's not just about him. Fate itself leads such people into the bosom of intelligence, and the most dangerous service, always on the edge of a knife, always between life and death, granites their characters.

GRANDFATHER OF THE RUSSIAN SPECIAL FORCE

Ilya Starinov before the war, in the forty-first, was already a colonel, an experienced miner, a saboteur. He taught sabotage in the partisan schools of the NKVD and the GRU, including the school of K. Sverchevsky in Moscow, where the leadership of the Comintern studied. In 1936 he left for Spain. There, in nine months, a sabotage group of internationalist fighters grew into a partisan detachment of 5,000 people.

A year later he returned to Moscow and found himself as if in a desert. His commanders, combat comrades-in-arms, students were imprisoned on terrible charges - of treason, of preparing assassination attempts on the leaders of the party, the state. The new chief of intelligence introduced him to Voroshilov.

People's Commissar praised, promised rewards, but instead - four months of idleness and waiting for arrest. They were not allowed into the apartment. Like a leper. He lived in a hotel and waited every day for a call to the Lubyanka. The son of Tsurypa, with whom

Ilya Starinov fought in Spain, helped. He introduced me to Voroshilov's son. So he got a second appointment with the people's commissar.

Marshal, in the presence of Starinov, spoke on the phone with Yezhov, asked: leave the colonel alone. The next day, Ilya Grigorievich was appointed head of the scientific and testing railway range in Gorokhovets. As they say, thanks for that. Manage yourself, work, test new railway equipment. However, this was not enough for Starinov.

His secret love is mine-explosive business. After all, it was he who, in 1932, during exercises with the help of mines, stopped the movement of all trains, completely compartment 136

troops of the "enemy" from the sources of his supply. The head of intelligence of the Red Army, Yan Berzin, did not hide his admiration. Ilya Starinov was promoted to three degrees at once. Instead of three cubes in his buttonholes, he now wore two

sleepers.

However, Yan Berzin, as an enemy of the people, was in prison. And Marshal Voroshilov shouted from the podium that they would beat the enemy with little blood and on foreign territory. This means that partisans and saboteurs are completely useless. And that is why the sabotage partisan reserve was destroyed, the bases and partisan warehouses in the forests of Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, created in case of war, were destroyed. Then, when this case comes, and not we, but the

enemy will be on our territory, in Kyiv they will frantically search for experts in partisan struggle and will not find anyone. All of them will be destroyed in the dungeons of the NKVD. Ilya Starinov never could have imagined that his passion for mines (and he himself designed and tested

them at the training ground) would be blamed on him. Mines were also not needed in the new war. They did not fit the new doctrine, and therefore Starinov's hobbies were declared nothing less than defeatist. This time, Ilya Grigorievich barely survived. For such a thing in those years, they would easily have been "consumed". But fate kept Starinov. Perhaps for a future war.

It will go down in the history of the Great Patriotic War with its unique mines, setting up engineering barriers, and daring acts of sabotage. Such, for example, as the organization of an explosion in Kharkov, when radio-controlled mines will be laid in the foundation of the most luxurious mansion in the city, where Kosior, Postyshev, and later Khrushchev once lived. The Germans will find a false mine in a pile of coal in the basement of a mansion and even issue a leaflet: don't be afraid of Russian

mines, they are bad explosives, their electrics are no good.

This leaflet will go to ours. And Colonel Starinov will again be declared a pest. Khrushchev, at that time a member of the Front's Military Council, would intercede for him. And in November 1941, a huge explosion would sound in Kharkov - a mansion would collapse, in which the head of the garrison, German General Lieutenant Georg von Braun, with his numerous servants, hurried to settle.

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The second explosion, which will also take place at the command of Starinov, will demolish an entire wing of the building where the headquarters of our military district was once located. According to the most conservative data, 60 SS men died under the rubble.

However, few people know that none of this could not be. As well as Ilya Grigorievich himself. And it is precisely this act, at first glance, quiet, everyday, that is most dear to me of all his exploits, because that trip to see Stalin in the first months of the war, on his own initiative, can only be called a feat.

And here's what happened. As is known, on July 3, 1941, Stalin, in his address to the Soviet people, called for blowing up roads in areas occupied by the enemy, damaging telephone and telegraph communications, setting fire to forests, and destroying warehouses.

Starinov, as a professional partisan saboteur, regarded this call as nothing more than madness. The head of the country called for guerrilla warfare, and not for a serious guerrilla war. The arson of forests was beneficial to the Nazis, not to the partisans. And the destruction of food warehouses again hit, first of all, the detachments operating behind enemy lines. Of course, Ilya Grigoryevich kept his professional assessments of Stalin's appeal to himself, but nevertheless he decided to meet with the leader. And he pursued it very hard.

Fortunately, Stalin was unable to receive the colonel, although Starinov had already been summoned for an audience and was in the Kremlin reception room. Now, from the height

of his age, Ilya Grigorievich admitted that most likely he would not have left the Stalinist office. After all, what he was going to say to the leader of the partisans already, really, does not matter. Whatever he said, everything went against what Stalin called for.

Did Starinov himself understand what step he was taking then? Understood. However, the sense of duty was greater than the fear for one's own life. No matter how strange it may sound today, Ilya Grigoryevich, perhaps, went to his death for the sake of the future partisan movement. By the way, he spent a lot of

effort to convince the chiefs of various ranks and ranks of the necessity and importance of deploying partisan and sabotage work behind enemy lines. Met with Voroshilov, Mekhlis, Khrushchev, convinced

First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus Ponom

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Renko. It was he, Starinov, who headed the first sabotage training center on the Western Front. In November 1941 on the table

Stalin finally got a memorandum "On the question of staging sabotage work" signed by Ponomarenko. However, Ilya Starinov wrote it. It was in it that he expressed an idea that later became academic: a tank battalion is a formidable force on the battlefield. In the echelon, the battalion is defenseless, and it is easy to liquidate it by two or three partisans-saboteurs.

So Colonel Ilya Starinov fought for his idea. A contemporary of the century, he still believes that the German army would have been defeated a year earlier, with fewer losses, if the partisan movement had been organized in our country on time and correctly.

I remember several years ago, even before the first Chechen war, when we talked with Starinov, he said: "If you write, write for our leaders that Vympel is a thousand times cheaper than Chechnya. Maybe they'll understand."

Alas, they did not understand anything.

"MAKE LIFE..."

General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov has a diploma. Comic, but so dear to the heart of a scout. They issued him when the head of Department "C" was retiring. It says that Drozdov was awarded the title of "honorary master of the Union of Informals." Well, the high rank is quite consistent with merit.

Frankly, the life of Yuri Drozdov is worthy of a novel. Perhaps one day he will write this novel himself. For this, he has everything: a truly amazing fate of a combat artillery officer, illegal intelligence officer, head of illegal intelligence. There is a memoirist talent. Yuri Ivanovich published two books in which he spoke about his previous work. He spoke interestingly, but sparingly. He himself indicated the reason: "Let the reader not scold me for understatement. The interests of the Motherland are above

Total..."

This has become a rule of his life for a long time. He was still a boy, a cadet of an artillery special school in 1942, together with his comrades, wanted to flee to Stalingrad, in a tank

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vo school. The escape failed. There was a strict, with the threat of expulsion from the Komsomol, a general meeting.

Two years later, in 1944, he will be only 19 years old. As the best of the cadets in the 1st Leningrad Artillery School, which was then in the city of Engels, Drozdov will be left at the school as the commander of a training platoon. He will refuse. And now he will legally "escape" to the front. Over time, Yuri Ivanovich will say this about his front-line life: "I did

not have to perform any heroic deeds during the hostilities. War is a terrible, bloody work, hard and ruthless. In order to survive for myself and others, I just tried to do it conscientiously, as much as possible for a junior lieutenant at less than nineteen

years".

Artilleryman Drozdov finished the war in Berlin, then served in Germany and the Baltic states. In 1952 he was a

student at the Military Institute of Foreign Languages in Moscow. Four years later, he was invited to serve in the KGB, in illegal intelligence as an ordinary operative.

Yuri Ivanovich told me: the first thing they asked when he arrived in Berlin at the office of the Plenipotentiary of the KGB of the USSR at the Ministry of State Security of the GDR, whether he could "make life" from another person.

"To make life..." He will do this for 35 years, so that, having retired, one day he will say: "It is possible to make life, but how difficult it is, what knowledge it requires, how many different features need to be provided for in order to come to life, speak and bring benefit from the life of a foreigner invented and documented by you, into which a Soviet intelligence officer turns. Soviet intelligence officer Yuri Drozdov turned into foreigners many times. Today we can only talk

about a few, the most famous of his "transformations". For example, about the role of Jurgen Drivs in the operational game with the Americans to free Rudolf Ivanovich Abel.

As you know, Abel, who worked in the United States under the names of Martin Collins and Emil Goldfuss, was betrayed by his radio operator Reino Heihanen.

On the night of June 22, 1957, Rudolf Abel, after a communication session with the Center, spent the night at the Latham Hotel. Here he was arrested by FBI agents.

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In the book "How the American Secret Service Works", publicist I. Esten writes: "For three weeks they tried to recruit Abel, promising him all the blessings of life ... When this did not happen, they began to frighten him with an electric chair ... But this did not Russian more malleable. When asked by the judge whether Abel pleaded guilty, he did not hesitate to answer: "No." Abel refused to testify." Rudolf Ivanovich was sentenced to thirty years in prison.

By that time he was 55 years old.

Already in the spring of 1958, our intelligence began to deal with the release of Abel. Was "made" a relative of Abel - Drivs, a petty employee living in the GDR. They became Yuri Drozdov. Fine, painstaking work went on for several years.

And on May 1, 1960, twenty miles southeast of Sverdlovsk, a Soviet anti-aircraft missile shot down a U-2 spy plane piloted by American pilot Francis Harry Powers. The pilot jumped out with a parachute, after landing he was arrested and taken

to Moscow. The Soviet Union and the United States exchanged mutual accusations. We pointed to Powers, we were reminded of Abel. Nevertheless, as Drozdov himself will say, the strike of our missile on the U-2 significantly increased the interest of the American side in the Abel case.

In February 1962, an exchange took place on the Alt-Glienicke bridge.

Abel to Powers. This exchange was also attended by a relative of Abel - Drivs. The last thing he did for the famous intelligence officer was to take him to Berlin shops to change his American prison robe for a decent suit and coat.

Abel flew to Moscow. Drivs also ceased to exist. He completed his mission.

However, a replacement for Rudolf Ivanovich had already been prepared, and the scout, who is now known by the nickname "George", left for the USA. He worked there for 15 long years and returned safely to his homeland.

The first steps of the successful work of "George" were provided by Yuri Drozdov. So, he became "Inspector Kleinert" - Yury Ivanovich will write later in his memoirs. I went and endured, made friends, acquaintances, fulfilled my inspector mission, remembering that "there are no worse German authorities" (as they said in our division

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not at the front) ... Having intercepted the verification documents and sent the confirmations necessary for the introduction of "George" to the West, Inspector Kleinert returned to East Berlin.

There was another role in the life of Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov - the role of "Baron von Fohenstein" - the head of a fictitious neo-Nazi organization. With the help of this "organization" it was possible to carry out an operation to infiltrate the BND. In the illegal intelligence of the USSR, this operation was called "Scorpio", and the agent worked under the code name "D-104". He was, in the words of Drozdov, "in the most sensitive unit of the BND for us."

After more than 20 years, the publication in the German "Focus" will excite all of Germany. An article will appear on the pages of the magazine with a link to Drozdov's book, which spoke about "D 104". Correspondents Hufilshulte and

Ludwig will introduce our intelligence officer to the German reader in this way: "Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov, who even studied at the acting courses of Max Reinhardt and spoke fluent German to prepare his intelligence activities, chose one of his favorite roles: from an intelligent KGB officer, he turns into Wehrmacht officer Baron von Vohenstein, who had just returned to Germany from his South American exile.

I think that in this performance they hit the mark. So it was, in fact. As for the noise and statements of journalists that "the search for a mole is now beginning in Pulok," I could not restrain myself. With bated breath at the next meeting, Drozdov asked: "Yuri Ivanovich, won't they find him?" The general smiled his charming smile and replied: "They won't find ..."

I honestly didn't expect any other answer. Believe me as a journalist and writer: from many meetings with Drozdov, I learned one thing - Yuri Ivanovich is a wise man, he will not say not only a word, but half a word if it harms intelligence. Sometimes in a journalistic way it is annoying, but in

state - very true. After Germany, Drozdov worked in China in 1964-1968. These were, without a doubt, the most acute, critical years in Soviet-Chinese relations.

It worked hard. Indeed, since 1949, employees of Chinese special services were trained in the Union. As he says

¹⁴²

Drozdov himself, "we opened our souls wide to them and revealed our innermost secrets ..." For which we later paid the price.

In 1975 - a business trip to New York. There, in a tense agent-operational situation, I had to spend four years. Already at this time, long before diplomat Shevchenko left for the Americans, our intelligence officers outlined a narrow circle of people in the Soviet colony in New York, among whom was a traitor.

Years of hard work, and information about the suspicions that had arisen went to the Center. And also a request to recall Shevchenko to Moscow. Instead of support - irritation of the representative of the USSR in the UN O. Troyanovsky and accusations of slander. However, something happened that Drozdov and his staff had warned about.

In the fall of 1979, Yuri Ivanovich was recalled to Moscow. One of his people gave him a piece of paper for the journey. He unfolded it already on the plane. Read. And it hurt my heart. Somewhere in the

sky, high sounds arose, As if softly and gently someone touched a string, Oh great happiness after a long separation Return back to your native country. To return not by someone, not yesterday's

talent, who realized the mistakes of the Parisian winter, not asked for old age by a gray-haired emigrant, but to return from work. From work to home.

No rain, no blizzard. Not a hot flame, Russia, broke your borders, And high stars rise above the forests. And the silver moon lies in the ravine. In the Sheremetyevskaya grove - birches,

birches. Silently the girl holds a field flower. Forgive me, Russia, involuntary tears, I just dreamed of meeting you for a long time.

He was returning home from work. It was October. Gold autumn. General Drozdov was appointed head of Department "C" (illegal intelligence).

In the autumn and winter of 1979 they would throw him into the heat of war. Afghanistan. Storming of Amin's palace. And this task was completed.

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On December 31, 1979, he gave a report to the Chairman of the KGB the first spoke Drozdov on the formation of a special unit for time, and a month later he came with a paper in which the idea of creating Vympel was outlined.

On August 19, 1981, at a closed joint meeting of the Council of Ministers of the USSR and the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU, it was decided to create a secret special-purpose detachment in the system of the State Security Committee to conduct operations outside the country "in a special period." So Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov became the father of

Vympel. He is not

only created him, but raised, nurtured, nurtured...

That's what he is - General Drozdov. V.A. Kryuchkov in his

In his memoirs, he said this about him: "For a long time he headed this service (illegal intelligence. - Major General Drozdov). Experienced, in love with his profession. In the past, he himself was in illegal work, once played the role of a fascist officer. He knew each employee personally, was proud of them, their successes, experienced failures when they got into trouble, did everything to help out. He never lost his nerves ... "Well, well said, I put an end to this with a light heart. Although I remain completely sure that Yuri

Ivanovich Drozdov's life is worthy of a novel, what a pity that I have no opportunity to write this wonderful novel.

ALEXANDER LAZARENKO - CASCADE COMMANDER

It's great when poetry is written about a person. Once I heard a quatrain from Afghan officers: No need for high awards. We don't need a dress uniform. Yes

Long live the glorious "Cascade" And its combat commander!

I heard something about the "Cascade", but with its commander it was possible to meet recently.

I think it was not without reason that the comrades in the Afghan war called "combat" General Alexander Ivanovich Lazarenko.

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Here is just one case from his biography, which is completely uncharacteristic for the head of a large division of the State Security Committee.

In Afghanistan, in Chakvardak, there was a small team from the Cascade under the leadership of Lieutenant Colonel Tabakov. The site was, I must say frankly, not an easy one.

And then one day in Kabul, Lazarenko receives an alarming telegram. Tabakov calls for help: he is attacked by a gang of 300 Mujahideen. There is a fight. How to help him? Lazarenko has no troops under his command, only operational officers and soldiers, drivers of armored personnel carriers, and even those are scattered throughout Afghanistan.

Lazarenko - to the headquarters of the army, to Marshal Sokolov, who led the task force: help. "We will give a battalion, but there is no battalion commander, do not blame me. It's tough with officers." That was the answer.

"All right," Alexander Ivanovich agreed, "let's get some people. I'll take it myself." And led. Tanks with trawls, artillery in support. The landing battalion under the command of Lazarenko made an 80-kilometer march at night, through unfamiliar terrain, and entered the battle in the morning. The gang was destroyed. The comrades

were rescued. How did the state security officer manage to carry out the night march so skillfully and competently, go to the combat area, organize a combined arms battle and win? After all, this is an art of a different kind than the one taught in the educational institutions of the state security agencies. Indeed, it is difficult to answer such questions when it comes to a KGB officer in the classical sense. Lazarenko

was not like that. He went to the authorities from the army, more precisely from the air force.

landing troops. Even

on the Kalinin Front, he commanded a platoon, company, battalion. And near Kursk he became the head of intelligence of the division. There, during the terrible battles on the Fiery Arc, 144 people remained from their formation of 17 thousand bayonets. And among them is Captain Alexander Lazarenko.

He was sent to the Higher Intelligence School of the General Staff of the Red Army in Moscow. After studies - abroad, Argentina, the post of assistant military attache of the Soviet embassy. 145

However, sometimes life does strange somersaults. Upon returning from Argentina, Lazarenko ends up in the Far East as deputy intelligence chief of the airborne corps. The soldier does not choose service. So is Lazarenko. He served, mastered landing skills, made more than a hundred parachute jumps. And everything would be fine, but the "Khrushchev" reduction of the army broke out. The administration of the corps was dispersed, and only one of the three divisions remained.

Alexander Ivanovich pleased with the deputy head of the operational department of the division.

It seemed that life, a career is rolling downhill. But the front-line battalion commander, scout Lazarenko did not lose heart. He knew his own worth, he believed that his knowledge and experience would be in

demand. And so it happened. The commander of the division, General Sorokin, called him to him: "Here's what, Lazarenko, take the 217th regiment. Pull it out."

The 217th regiment is a byword in the division. The collapse is complete. Two years on the test they get a solid "deuce". Here, take it out. What can you do, harnessed, pulled as best he could. It turned out that he could do well. Brought the regiment to the best. But humans are not robots. And in the best regiment, emergencies happen. It did not bypass the 217th either. They robbed a shelf store. They took a hundred gold watches. At that time, the amount was considerable. And the regiment is no joke - two thousand souls, how can you find it here?

And yet, Alexander Ivanovich figured out that the thief was from the third company. She was on duty in the dining room that night. And the dining room next to store.

He lined up a regimental commander and said: "I know who stole the watch. I give you three days. If he turns himself in to confess, I won't put him on trial. Commander's word. By the end

of the third day, the thief had surrendered. The watch was returned to the store, and Lazarenko was taken into circulation: the thief was on trial. The regimental regiment rested. I will not give out the soldier, because I gave my word before the formation.

"What word," the authorities frowned, "who has the word? You're hiding a criminal." It came to a scandal, here Alexander Ivanovich himself was unhappy. He is facing a criminal case for harboring. And then the commander of the district, General Penkovsky,

arrived at the regiment. He asks how are you. "Yes, things are bad," Lazarenko replies. And he told everything as it was.

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"We'll have to save you, otherwise they'll really sue you. For defending your officer's honor," he chuckled.

commander and offered Lazarenko a promotion to the head of intelligence of the district. The position is solid, general's, Alexander Ivanovich agreed. Lucky. Yes, definitely lucky. After all, it could have been

otherwise. Had it not been at that moment in Penkovsky's regiment, or if another general had turned up instead of him, they might not have sued, but they spoiled the service.

Some then looked with sincere bewilderment, sympathized, they say, for whom are you laying your head on the chopping block, for a thief? But really, a ridiculous act, according to the current, "corrupt", times. The Colonel almost loses his shoulder strap, but he keeps his word. Eh, Alexander Ivanovich, people are now shredded, many of them do not understand what a commander's word is, an officer's

honor.

So Colonel Lazarenko carried this honor unsullied through the years. And when he already served in Moscow, Margelov was the head of intelligence in the Airborne Forces, and when he was taken to the

KGB. This, by the way, was also a male act. After 20 years of service in the landing, where, figuratively speaking, every dog in any garrison knew him and took him for his own, it was so cool to change fate. Changed. He became deputy head of the 13th

department of reconnaissance and sabotage work at the First Main Directorate of the KGB. Headed the scientific and technical direction.

Particular attention was paid to the creation of special weapons. It was under his leadership that a unique silent pistol was put into production. It is silent, and not "Makarov" with a silencer. This was not the case for the Americans either. They managed to get it through the Afghans, who, at one time, our employees entrusted with weapons. For the creation of a pistol, Lazarenko was

awarded a high rank
laureate of the State Prize of the USSR.

For a long time, Colonel Lazarenko "walked" in general positions, but became a general only in the war. in the Afghan war. The day before, Yuri

Vladimirovich Andropov called him. Lazarenko flew from Kabul to the KGB chairman. He asked questions for an hour and a half. Who is preparing the writing? Who is erasing? Are there lice? Be honest. What is there to hide, there were lice. In war, as in war.

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When he flew back, 20 washing machines were loaded onto the plane with him. Oh, how useful they were there. And soon the good news came: Lazarenko was awarded a general's

rank.

Shoulder straps were handed over by the head of PGU Kryuchkov himself. In Yasenevo the table was laid. Then Lazarenko said his toast: the soldier who does not dream of becoming a general is bad. But it is even worse if, having become a general, he ceases to be a soldier.

What applause Alexander Ivanovich got then! What applause!.. But the toast seems to have been born impromptu. Perhaps, indeed, impromptu. Only behind him

- whole life.

ORDER: DESTROY HANS FRANK

There was a time when every boy in our country knew that Krakow was saved from destruction by the Soviet intelligence officer Major Whirlwind with his fighting friends. And indeed, real facts were put in the basis of the favorite feature film of Soviet boys.

Major Whirlwind was known and loved by the whole country. However, to this day, few people know that the glory of the savior of Krakow, along with Whirlwind, should rightfully be shared by the KGB saboteur, partisan, retired colonel Alexei Nikolaevich Botyan. The fact is that the Germans had a spare, backup option

for the destruction of the ancient Polish city. They planned to use ammunition from the warehouses of Nowy Sącz, in the Krakow Voivodeship, and, no doubt, they would have put this plan into practice. If ... However, everything is in order. In the spring of 1944, when the front was rapidly advancing to the West, it was decided to transfer several Soviet partisan formations and detachments to the territory of Poland.

Soon the detachment under the command of the Hero of the Soviet Union Viktor Karasev crossed the state border. It included the reconnaissance and sabotage group of Alexei Botyan. At the end of April, Karasev summoned Botyan to him. "Aleksey," the commander smiled,

"you seem to be a Pole with us, aren't you?" — Yes, how to say? Mother is Ukrainian and father is Polish...

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"That's what I'm saying..." Karasev winked. "But seriously, the Center gave an order to our detachment to relocate to the south of the Krakow Voivodeship. It is dangerous for the whole detachment to go, so you and your group will go first ... An order is an order. Twenty-eight saboteurs, led by Botyan, set

off. On one of the days we stopped in an abandoned farm, put up posts. And suddenly something flashed in the sky overhead. Large cigar-like projectile. Yes, even with a wild rumble. Even then, Botyan had heard something about the fascist fau rockets - a new weapon of retaliation, with which Hitler boasted of crushing his enemies.

However, whether this is "fau" has yet to be seen. Estimating approximately the trajectory of the rocket, the partisans went on a search and soon buried themselves in a thorn. Several rows of wire blocked their path. They set up surveillance and made sure: in front of them was Hitler's test site for V-missiles. The rest was a matter of technique: the polygon was plotted on the map, the coordinates were transferred to

the center. Soon our aircraft launched a bomb attack on the indicated square. And Botyan's group was already far from this place.

Near the city of Ilzha, they met a small detachment of the People's Army under the command of Lieutenant Vislich. The appearance of Soviet partisans caused great joy among the Poles. Immediately, the commander of the Polish detachment turned to Alyosha, as they called Botyan, to help them destroy the German garrison in Ilzha. It was not easy for Botyan's group to get

involved in the battle, because Karasev set a different task: to conduct reconnaissance. But at the same time, Botyan understood that it was impossible to refuse a joint operation. It will have great moral and political significance. After all, the Poles saw the Soviet partisans as their liberators. Leaving without helping the People's Army meant undermining faith in our country. And Botyan agreed. Together with Vislich, they developed a joint military operation. At night, the estate where the Germans were located was surrounded by partisans, the house was bombarded with grenades and entered into

battle. The Germans soon surrendered. The city was taken without loss.

The Poles freed their comrades from prison, destroyed documents of the local gendarmerie, seized weapons, more
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supplies, food. And they moved again into the depths of the Starakhovitsky forest.

Here they parted. Everyone had their own path. Group Botiana continued the raid into the Krakow area.

In mid-June, Botyan sent a radiogram to Karasev's detachment, which confirmed his arrival at the place. There was a lot of work to be done to study the situation, choose the base of the formation, strengthen ties with local Polish partisans. At the end of 1944, Lieutenant Botyan and his group prepared an assassination

attempt on the Governor-General of Krakow, the executioner of the Poles Hans Frank. The details of the operation had already been worked out, the Center was asked to send a silent pistol and English magnetic mines, when suddenly a new task was defined. Her decision could not be delayed.

But the fact is that the partisans learned about the existence of a large ammunition depot. It was located in the castle of the city of Nowy Sanch and consisted of tens of tons of explosives. The Nazis hastily replenished its stocks. And since the front was approaching, everything felt that the Nazis were preparing some kind of action. As it turned out, the Nazis wanted to blow up Krakow with this explosive. Now every hour was precious. But how do you

get to the warehouse? The case helped. The partisans managed to capture the cartographer engineer Zygmund Ogarek from the rear headquarters. In exchange for his life, he agreed to cooperate. And somehow Ogarek told me: a worker is needed in the warehouse to carry the shells. Soon the industrious loader Witold Mlynts appeared there. After he scouted and reported on tons of explosives in the castle cellars,

Botyan supplied him with a magnetic mine, skillfully disguised as a piece of ordinary sole.

In the evening, left alone, Mlynts pushed the "sole" into the depths of the mine piles. The explosion thundered on the morning of January 18, 1945. According to the surgeon of the local hospital, 400 fascists died from the explosion of the warehouse.

True, the executioner Hans Frank miraculously managed to escape. When a mine was already planted in his bedroom in Krakow, he hastily left the city. But retribution overtook the fascist: on October 1, 1946, by the verdict of the International Military Tribunal, he was executed.

And Botyan received his second Order of the Red Banner. Only it was not possible to attach it to the tunic even after 150

war. On the instructions of the reconnaissance and sabotage service, Aleksey Nikolaevich "settled" in one of the European countries, graduated from an educational institution there, and became the leading engineer of the mine. Worked hard. A few years after completing the assignment, Botyan will return to Moscow and

become an employee of the 13th department. That's when he will try on his orders for the first time.

SENTENCE OF THE "FATHERS" OF DRUG BUSINESS

If Colonel Dmitry Gerasimov had kept silent that time, he would definitely have become a Hero of the Soviet Union. Known throughout the 40th

Army, the commander of the special forces brigade was sentenced to death by the "fathers" of the Afghan drug business. Yes, and for what. This commando with his guys spoiled a lot of blood "spirits". And recently it has become completely unbearable: on the cherished trail of drug dealers, I took a caravan coming from Pakistan. That caravan is not just golden, it is priceless. Eight trucks carry 14 tons of raw opium. Unforeseen losses!

"Godfathers" for the head of Colonel Gerasimov appointed the most generous award in the entire Afghan war. It just failed to pay off. Perhaps it was the authority in the eyes of his colleagues that prompted Dmitry

Mikhailovich to speak at a meeting of the Military Council of the 40th Army.

The statement of the brigade commander, from the point of view of the chief political officer of the army who was present there, was extremely impudent. Gerasimov said from the rostrum that his officers, who do not get out of the raids, leave for the Union without sometimes receiving even a modest medal, and political workers de in orders. Moreover, the brigade commander suggested paying attention to the political workers in the hall - which of them does not have an order? The general could not stand this: "You want to say that political workers do not fight? ..

— They are fighting...

Gerasimov did not talk about those who, shoulder to shoulder with them, go to the "spirits", but about those who wipe their pants in large and small headquarters, but manages to substitute the breast in time for the order. 151

The general political worker remembered that dispute. Oh, how I remember. He cut down one performance for the Hero of the Soviet Union back in Kabul, the other already in Moscow. According to the law of meanness, it again came to the same general. Here, in the capital, he "sat" on orders, deciding whose chest was worthy of the Golden Star and whose chest was not. Of course, despite all the exploits, the chest of the brigade commander Gerasimov did not fit into the heroic line. So there is the Order of the Red Star, there is the Red Banner, and even the highest order of the Soviet country - Lenin - is also present, but the Hero is not.

Although, frankly, the life of Dmitry Gerasimov contained so much heroic that for some, two or even three lives would be enough. There are people who are always in the rear, in the train. They feel good there, warm and cozy. And people like Gerasimov are always on the cutting edge. Okay, when he became a commando, then the profession itself, as they say, obliges. But even before that, as a boy, he loved risky business: he flew at the Vitebsk flying club, studied at the Armavir pilot school. And when he was expelled from the school, he went to the mine as a sinker.

In 1964 he was drafted into the army as a soldier. In 1967 he entered the Tashkent Tank Army and graduated a year later. He passed all the exams externally, received the rank of lieutenant. But he did not stay in the tankers for a long time, he ended up in the special forces as a group commander. Since then, he has gone through all the steps - from the command group to the brigade commander.

And in a peaceful, stagnant, as it is now commonly called, time, he found "hot spots". In 1967, the Crimean Tatars in Shymkent captured the police arsenal. In those years, it was not customary to write about such incidents, but this did not change the essence and degree of danger; I had to take risks, but get the job done. What about the Tashkent earthquake? Everyone knows how selflessly the entire Soviet

Union rebuilt the city. But here is how Soviet special forces selflessly saved banks and savings banks of Tashkent from robbers and marauders, this is almost

No one knows.

Dmitry Gerasimov was also there. Then

Afghanistan. Upon his return - the Academy of the General Staff. There, by the way, he studied with the future vice-president Alexander Rutskoi, ministers Pavel Grachev and Anatoly Kulikov.

After graduating from the academy, he served in the GRU.

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In July 1992, he was appointed commander of the Vypel special unit. A little over a year later, October 1993 struck. Does anyone think that the whole history of today's Russia could

have gone completely differently? On the night of October 4, there were two armed professionally trained groups in the Kremlin - Alfa and Vypel. There, in the Kremlin, that night no one could resist them. They decided who would be in power on the morning of the 4th. ... In the morning, Yeltsin was in power.

And soon came "gratitude" from the authorities. Vypmel was transferred to the Ministry of Internal Affairs, which was tantamount to the destruction of a unique unit.

Dmitry Mikhailovich Gerasimov refused police epaulettes. Later, he became chief of staff of the unified Antiterrorist Center of the FSB of Russia. In subordination, along with other units, he also had Office "B", in other words, his native Vypmel.

NEW STRATEGY AND TACTICS REQUIRED

In 1962, American President John F. Kennedy said: "War with rebels, guerrillas, gangs is a different type of war, new in intensity and old in origin. War, where infiltration is used instead of offensive, where victory is achieved by dispersing and exhausting the enemy's forces, and not by destroying him, it requires new strategy and tactics, special forces and new forms of warfare. Alas, Russia had no new strategy and tactics, no new forms of military operations. Not to mention some special counter-guerrilla forces. And the events in Chechnya developed, by the way, classically, in strict

accordance with the US charter FM 100-20. The first phase is the hidden origin and strengthening of the separatist, insurgent movement. Here the rebels are still weak and tend to consolidate their forces. And

this, perhaps, is the only chance to stop their activities by the methods of work of the special services. We must pay tribute to Dudayev. He is fast

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consolidated the rebel forces. Dispersed the Supreme Soviet of the Republic. He denounced the Chairman of the Supreme Council, Doku Zavgadev, as a communist. The deputies who tried to object were severely beaten. Their legs and arms were broken with iron bars, and their heads were pierced. The chairman of the city council of Grozny died tragically. The next step of the Soviet General Dudayev is also calculated. He understood that it was

impossible to fight with old guns, and therefore the robbery of military warehouses and attacks on military units began. Even the army was strong enough. The leadership and officers of the 173rd training center (in other words, the division) turned to the Kremlin. They are ready to go out with equipment and weapons. If necessary, come out with fights. The center was deaf to appeals

military.

So Dudayev armed his bandarmy. The second stage (according to the American charter) is when the bandits, having gained strength and armed themselves, are able to seize the initiative from the government. They conduct non-standard military operations, pursuing, first of all, the achievement of psychological goals. The bandits put the army in unusual conditions for which the military is not ready. It only remains to add here - in the Chechen war from the first days, virtually the entire Russian

the press was on the side of the militants. And finally, the

third stage. Civil War. Large military formations take part in hostilities on both sides. It would seem that the situation is becoming more familiar to the troops, but there are difficulties of a political nature. the insurgent lobby in the Partisan press, government and public authorities raises a fuss about the use of aircraft and heavy weapons systems.

There are difficult moral aspects that the army is unable to solve - the war is being waged on its own territory, the losses among the civilian population are growing. The federal authorities are in a difficult position.

An analysis of the Chechen events shows that, developing according to the classical scheme of the civil war, they also carried its characteristic features. Namely: the bandits stubbornly create the appearance of their invincibility; federal authorities constantly show their incompetence and inability to act

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effectively; the militants are doing their best to win public opinion over to their side. And as a result of all this, the initiative passes to gangs, and the federal forces are weakening ..

Thus, the opinion about a certain "feature", the originality of the Chechen war, has no basis. As well as statements that, they say, the federal forces cannot win the guerrilla war. An example is the usual "clip" of national liberation guerrilla wars, where the rebels won - Mozambique, Angola, Algeria ...

But there are other examples as well. They do not have to go over three seas. We are talking about the suppression of nationalist insurgent movements in the post-war years in Western Ukraine and the Baltic states. As is known, the intelligence and sabotage service of the country coped with this task successfully.

However, the lessons of the counter-guerrilla struggle of the 50s were firmly forgotten. The time of the first stage, when the influence of police methods is effective, has been missed. In

the later stages, the key to success is the skillful development of counter-tactics of on basis study activities. bandit formations; intelligence organized at a high level, providing maximum information for the anti-partisan struggle; isolating the leaders of the insurgency; identification and destruction of hidden recreation centers, training, replenishment of supplies; the use against bandits of specially trained, mobile, autonomous units independent of the rear. It must be admitted with bitterness that none of this was done. And it couldn't be done objectively. By the time Russia entered the first Chechen war, Russia had essentially lost its army and its best officers, and the organs of the Ministry of Internal

Affairs and state security were significantly weakened.

So what was this war? Shameful and thoughtless, bloody and tragic, terrible in its losses and violated goals. It seems to me that today many would like to forget her as soon as possible, to erase her from memory.

But you can't forget her. Forgetting this war is no less a crime than unleashing it. And therefore, we must remember about it, no matter how painful it is, think about it, analyze, dissect the causes and secret levers of it and learn. Learn to fight. Because the old truth, alas, is alive: if you want peace, prepare for war.

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EVERYONE HAS A WAR...

Anyone who has been at war even a little knows that everyone has their own war. The general and the soldier.

Years later, both of them will talk about their war. Not at all similar to the war of a front-line friend. Perhaps that is why it is so difficult to write about the war. All written front-line soldiers "try on the tooth", comparing with their impressions, experiences, thoughts.

Such is the fate of our Fatherland - whether by evil fate, or by the mediocrity of politicians - we do not live without war. And now Afghan veterans have joined the front-line soldiers of the Great Patriotic War, and now "Chechens" as well.

"Vympel" also went through the roads of that first Chechen war. They entered Chechnya at the forefront. Only some of them were members of the police "Run", others were employees of the FSB Special Operations Directorate (first the special operations department, later the directorate). The share of a special forces fighter is

such that the war does not bypass anyone. All "Vympelovtsy", to a single one, went through Afghanistan at one time, now Chechnya.

And everyone in this common war had their own war, their own misfortune ... The

war of Lieutenant Colonel Vladimir Grishin: - We had a trial group of ten people from Bega. IN Grozny, we were among the first on New Year's Eve.

However, Chechnya began earlier for us. December 12 arrived in Mozdok. Goals and objectives are not clear. Sort of like tracking gangs. They did some work, went out for operations a couple of times. On New Year's Eve, an order was received: we were leaving for an operation in Grozny for two or three days. On December 30, they moved

in a large column. Thousands in a column one and a half cars.

It took twelve or thirteen hours to Grozny. We stopped on the outskirts, took a breath and went to Grozny ... "to clean up." Zero information. What is going on there, who is doing what - it is not clear. On the map, the city was divided into sectors, like a message came: the capital is empty, everyone left it.

On two headquarters armored personnel carriers, one ours, the other Andrey Krestyaninov, the future Hero of Russia, walked along

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Terrible, consider it a solemn march and drove to the outskirts in full confidence that the city was taken.

No resistance was met. We celebrated the New Year, as far as it was possible in those conditions, and on January 1 in the morning again to clean up. Again, on BTEers, four hundred meters did not reach Dudayev's palace, and we were "pressed" on both sides by our own and others. And it's hard to say who is more. To understand the intensity of the battle, I will give an example. Only two of our armored personnel carriers returned from four posts. We counted up to five RPG bursts along the sides. Our BTEer just drove off, an army one took its place

bempeshka. And then a blow, and a combat vehicle - to shreds.

We were greatly rescued by Krestyaninov. He went about two hundred meters ahead, turned the armored personnel carrier around and did not move until we got out of there. That's how we ended up in a fierce battle, in an unfamiliar city. Where to go is not clear. While collecting the column, it began to get dark. You can't leave the city - in the dark they will kill your own. And everywhere shooting, tracers, bullets fly. Someone got the information that ours are at the cannery. They began to make their way to the factory. Made it through. Indeed, General Vorobyov, riot police, and internal troops were already there.

In my opinion, the cannery was not the best place to deploy troops. There are no shelters, the bandits quickly figured out the accumulation of armored vehicles and began to conduct an intensive mortar attack.
fire.

They learned to hide from mines. In combat conditions, experience quickly comes. Although they died here too. On the first day we lost the first man, a soldier of the Krasnodar SOBR.

Until January 4, they stayed on the "canned food". We went on cleanings, patrols. Then we moved to the dairy. There, the position was already an order of magnitude better: concrete floors, there is where to drive the equipment, hide ourselves, there is where to set up posts. In general, you can live. Settled down. And the epic with the "Pavlov's house" began.

So this house was called by analogy with Stalingrad. It was January 6, the eve of Christmas.

Our group entered this house. The building is tactically important, high-rise. When we entered, there were already soldiers sitting there.

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The guys spent the night normally, the shelling was dense, but there were no losses. And in the morning, when they began to change them, riot policemen went instead of the Soviets. Three residents of Yaroslavl and Sasha Karagodin, the guide, were killed.

It was a trouble-free guy, the only one who knew Grozny. He drove all the columns himself, on the armor. And then ran into a sniper. Not on a militant with a Dragunov rifle, but on a professional who does not hit a bulletproof vest, but between, under the arm. And then General Vorobyov was covered, and they died

with him
four people.

That's how the days were. Meanwhile, the situation began to escalate. There was a growing tension. Still, it seems they came to ensure the safety of investigative actions, and what kind of investigation is there - war ...

At this time, General Mikhail Konstantinovich Egorov appeared very appropriately at the dairy. We must pay tribute, he managed to find a common language with the officers. Reassured, said that the replacement is being prepared. And, indeed, after January 10, we began to delay our forces, a week later the group was dragged to Mozdok.

The war of Lieutenant Colonel Nikolai Putnik (surname changed): - This war brought nothing to anyone but suffering, victims, destruction, poverty.

She revealed many problems and showed the attitude of the state towards people in uniform. My opinion is that if you are going to do something, then you need to bring it to the end, and not stop halfway. I remember that in May 1995 one of our

commandant's offices turned to the leadership. The Chechen sniper did not give life. There were losses, constantly lay in wait for the fighters and fired.

"Komendachi" tried on their own to track him down and destroy him. Conducted raids in the direction from which he fired. They found beds, set traps, laying grenades with the pin pulled out.

Everything is in vain. The sniper came, neutralized the grenade... In a word, he was an experienced man.

The difficulty was also that the commandant's office and sniper the beds were separated by a river. That is a place to fire

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chosen carefully, cleverly. It is impossible to quickly approach it, the river prevents it, it is also difficult to stretch the wire to the explosive device. We left with a group of employees, examined the

beds. They calculated the actions of the bandit and ... carried out the operation. This is for the militant "commander"

inexperienced

seemed

extraprofessional. But it was difficult for him to compete with us. The next time, as soon as his bandit rifle spoke, there was an explosion. Just under the bed where he was. More sniper in these places did not appear. War of the Hero of Russia Sergei Shavrin: - The first group of fighters of the Special

Operations Directorate, consisting of 22 people, was headed by General Dmitry Mikhailovich Gerasimov. We entered together with the 45th Special Forces Regiment of the Airborne Forces and were placed at the

disposal of the corps commander, Lieutenant General Lev Rokhlin. It was the first day of the New Year.

Frankly, fate kept us. On December 31, we were supposed to fly to Grozny and land at one of the stadiums, where weapons were handed out that day to everyone who wanted to defend free Ichkeria. Imagine our situation: three helicopters are landing on a football field, and hundreds of people with weapons are around ... And yet, on New Year's Eve, we

marched to the Tolstoy-Yurt area and entered Grozny. I remember that our column moved at 0.10 on the first of January.

The exit was unsuccessful. The conductor from the corps, for some unknown reason, pressed the gas and disappeared around the corner, and we walked along Khmelnitsky Street, along Pervomayskaya and rolled out almost to the city center. They

realized that they had gone in the wrong direction, began to turn around and were fired on from a nine-story building on Khmelnitsky Square. The grenade hit the last BTEER, several people were injured. But the group was taken out without loss. We went again in the

morning. We are 16 people, led by the head of the intelligence of the Airborne Forces. Soon they appeared before General Rokhlin and reported. I then had to meet with him more than once, an excellent commander, competent, combative.

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The commander entrusted us with a difficult task: to ensure the safety of the column routes along which military equipment and troops advanced.

This is Lermontovskaya street. There are houses, the private sector, on one side, and high-rise buildings on the other. Militants in groups of 5-6 people made their way into houses and fired columns.

And the street is completely crammed with military vehicles, tankers, vehicles with ammunition. In general, every shot is a hit and a lot of damage, losses. From our joint team with commando

paratroopers, we formed four groups and cleared the bandits from the quarter. They set up ambushes, and when militants were found, they went into battle. The bandits are afraid of an open battle, they avoid it. They have one tactic: bite-run away, bite-run

away... They soon realized that there were ambushes, there were special forces, it was not safe there. And the bandit raids stopped. Several blocks along the road were empty. These are the first days of January. The troops are already exhausted by the fighting, there is an acute shortage of officers. Once they were

in one of the battalions: there was no battalion commander, one of the staff officers led, platoon commanders commanded companies, sergeants commanded platoons.

In this difficult situation, General Rokhlin gives the order: the group, together with the paratroopers, to capture the high-rise building of the petrochemical institute.

This building dominated the entire college campus, which our troops could not manage to take. In the morning we took over. And I must

say, very timely. Loopholes were already prepared there, ammunition was prepared, even zinc with cartridges was opened. The sniper comes in, everything is ready. It charges, works, goes to the wing of the building, which is not shot through, and again equips itself to the window ... Having captured the building, we installed machine guns, the army men brought their

heavy weapons, ATGMs, and the assault began. In almost a day of fighting, the entire institute campus was cleared, in front of which they had been standing for more than one day.

The command liked this success, and the next time we had to storm the building of the Council of Ministers. It is a large rectangular building with an internal well. 160

Worked out a plan of operation, but at the last moment there was a breakdown. All interaction was organized with the commander of a tank brigade, and the brigade commander was wounded at the command post and sent to the hospital. His deputy is not aware of the operation, he cannot organize interaction. In a word, it went wrong.

Everyone returned to their original positions. Our group went to spend the night at a cannery, and in the morning the paratroopers decided that they could handle it themselves. But they failed.

Two groups ran into the building of the Council of Ministers, and the third, which was supposed to carry heavy weapons, flamethrowers, explosives, came under mortar fire from the Chechens. They had to overcome the area, and at that time the first test mine arrived, then a series of four ...

One hit our Tunguska anti-aircraft mount, the ammunition detonated, and three officers serving the mount were killed at once.

Behind the Tunguska, a dozen and a half soldiers with full weapons were hiding. Plastite and flamethrowers began to burst. Eight people died immediately, the rest died of wounds.

Paratrooper senior lieutenant Igor Chebotarev went with us as commander of an armored personnel carrier. That day he was in this group. Both of his legs were blown off, and the officer bled to death. A young boy, he was about to have a baby. For several days of fighting in one of the companies of the 45th

Airborne Regiment, three people out of twenty-seven who entered Grozny remained. Then we worked together with the military counterintelligence, ensuring

the security of the troops. The leadership finally realized that the Chechens, dressed in camouflage, freely roam our positions, the location of units, and then mines suddenly fly there.

There were other cunning tricks of the bandits. They fight at night, and in the morning they come to the cannery and sleep nearby, in neighboring houses. The calculation is simple: who will look for militants under their noses? We took

countermeasures, carried out several raids and, indeed, found militants. Our exits into the depths of the bandits'

defense were quite extensive. They found a car for charging self-propelled anti-aircraft guns and two charred corpses of Russian

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officers. They informed theirs. It turns out that they have been looking for since the New Year. Well, at least they crossed it off the list of missing people ...

The local population was treated very well: they gave guides, told where the militants appeared, at what time, the bandits spent the night only in Russian houses, the Chechens were not set up. Stayed overnight once and never again.

returned. Officer

Vladimir Ivanov worked with us. Originally from Chechnya, Russian. He was very worried, his father and brother remained here in Grozny. General

Gerasimov gave the go-ahead, and we went on a raid to search for relatives. They found their father, brother, his wife, children, Volodya's nephews, aunt, and took them all out.

But in the destroyed house, which was on the front line, there were many civilians. It was terrible to look at. But we were told that the city was empty, everyone had left.

Crying, asking, shoving notes, begging to call relatives. We took out Volodya's relatives and returned six more times, until we took everyone away. A terrible picture. In the basement of one house, from where, by the way, the militants were shooting, they saw a pregnant woman who was about to give birth, next to a man wounded by shrapnel. Frightened children are right there, cakes are being baked here. Found a colonel, honored military pilot of the USSR,

lay paralyzed. How could we leave them?

That's how it is, the Chechen

war... ...War correspondent, writer Konstantin Simonov once said: "You can't tell about the whole war right away." You're right, I didn't try right away. However, these few confessions are also a story about the Vypmel war. More precisely, about the "Vypmel" in the war. On it, "Vypmel"

knew the bitterness of the first loss - a special forces fighter, Major Sergei Romashin, died. He was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of Russia.

CHECHEN WAR IN THE FATE OF "VYMPEL"

In early August 1996, a fragile truce was established in Chechnya. The situation was difficult. The militants licked their wounds, accumulated strength. Everyone understood that the truce would not last long. However, the worst world, as you know, is better than the best

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war. And that is why people, tired of the war, wanted to prolong this bad peace even for a day, even for an hour.

The militants entered Grozny on 6 August. The war broke out with renewed vigor. In essence, the federal units, after so many months of war, losses, blood, left the capital of Chechnya to the militants. Here is how the Hero of Russia, Vypmel fighter Major Sergei Shavrin said about it: "There were more than enough equipment, troops in Grozny. When we left the city, we rode in an armored corridor. Tanks, infantry fighting vehicles stood five meters away. If all this equipment had fired a volley, there would have been nothing left of Grozny. And we simply gave Grozny to the militants after two years of war."

In those days, several centers of defense of the federal troops remained in the city. One of them, known for its confrontation, is the hostel of the Federal Security Service Administration for Chechnya.

What kind of hostel it was was no secret to anyone. From the first days of the war, the bandits showed a special attitude towards the hostel.

interest. The "Vympelovtsy" told me that the militants "put up" a permanent post at the entrance to the building. Whenever the FSB officers came out of the entrance, they were met across the street by a bandit "outdoor" - a squatting Chechen. One agent replaced another, but the post always remained. So the number of employees living in the hostel was not a secret for the militants.

They also knew the windows of the rooms where the Vympelites lived. Before them, the fighters of the "A" unit were housed in the same rooms. So on the very first day, when the group under the command of Sergei Shavrin was establishing communication and pulling the antenna to his window, a builder shouted to them from below: "Alpha! Guys, don't go there. There is a window next

to it." Here is the disguise. This only says that the special forces have no place among all. You don't have to be seven spans in your forehead to understand: special forces are special weapons, special communications, and special equipment. All this is a very tasty morsel for bandits. And therefore,

with the beginning of the shelling, the very first grenade fired by the Chechens at the FSB dormitory flew into the window where the "Vympelovtsy" lived.

The security personnel took the fight. Among them were 9 fighters of the Vympel unit. The day before, a government delegation from Moscow arrived in Grozny for talks. It includes Mikhailov,

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Stepashin, other high officials of the capital. Major Shavrin with two employees left to guard and ensure the safety of the delegation. The remaining nine fighters were led by Major Sergei Romashin. The strike of the militants on the hostel

was powerful and furious, the attack is organized from different directions. For several days, having pulled together their best forces, the bandits stormed the hostel of the FSB. But unsuccessfully.

They boastfully declared that they would definitely take a hostel, but a day, a second, a third passed ... This hostel became a bone in the throat of the Chechens.

From the very first minutes of the battle, Major Sergei Romashin skillfully led his unit. Having given the necessary orders, he went up to the attic with a sniper rifle and fired at the enemy.

The Chechens concentrated their attack on the upper floors, the attic of the building. They really wanted to destroy the special forces. Romashin was wounded: a penetrating wound to the lung.

His comrades-in-arms carried him from the attic, bandaged him, and he continued to direct the battle. "Vympelovtsy" met the bandits with the fire of machine guns, underbarrel grenade launchers, special weapons, when approaching them at close range they were bombarded with grenades.

The hostel has turned into a fortress. The militants were sometimes afraid to lean out from around the corner, the FSB officers fired so accurately. And now the unit has a cassette with a recording of the battle

hostels. The operator was among the militants. The film clearly captures the "heroism and fearlessness" of the bandits, when they, without appearing around the corner of the house, blindly, at random, fire.

The Chechens drove a tank, several armored personnel carriers and almost point-blank shot at the building. The ceiling of the fourth floor collapsed, the upper spans were engulfed in flames. The defenders of the hostel went down below and continued to fight. On the third day, the decision to evacuate was made. Wounded

needed qualified medical care.

Two groups, which included drivers, "kommandachi", some operational workers, left the hostel and safely went to their own.

The wounded were sent with the third group. Among them were Major Romashin. The group, being in an open area, came under mortar fire, they started talking from all sides

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militant firepower. Many FSB officers died in this battle.

Sergei Romashin received another wound - in the leg. Now the major could not walk. An experienced officer, he correctly assessed the situation. Under fire, when comrades were dying around him, an attempt to take him out of the battle could end tragically. Both he and his colleague would have died.

Twice wounded, bleeding, Sergei Romashin fought to the end. 15 employees of the Federal Service were killed in this battle Russia's security.

The rest of Vympel employees remained in the hostel to end. They were the last to leave the burning building.

Three fighters, led by Major Sergei Shavrin, tried to break into Grozny. As part of the 205th brigade, they attempted to enter the city from Khankala. At the bridge over the Sunzha, the brigade's column was fired upon and withdrew.

Later, Major Sergei Shavrin will be among those who will lead the search for the body of the deceased comrade, Sergei Romashin. After an agreement with the militants to hand over the bodies of our dead, Shavrin twice went to Grozny, to the hostel of the FSB. After all, initially there was no exact data on where Romashin died. One of the drivers said that, allegedly, in the basement of the hostel there was a murdered officer, who was called either Sergey or Sergeyevich. Indeed, the body of an officer was found, but it was another employee.

Romashina was found among the 15 dead. Several corpses were burned, others were buried by our Russian residents of Grozny. Shavrin spent two days with the militants in search of Romashin's body.

There were moments when he himself almost fell under a Chechen bullet. At the time when the corpse was being carried out, a tank shell flew into the Chechen positions. Who shot where, try to figure it out. A militant with a reproach, they say, agreed not to shoot, but yours are shooting. Let's go see if someone is killed - and

you're finished. They came. Fortunately, no one was hurt from the explosion of the projectile. So Major Shavrin remained to live and took out the body of a

comrade. ...Two Heroes of Russia - Sergei Shavrin and awarded this title posthumously Sergei Romashin - also a memory of that terrible recent war.

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That, perhaps, is all. That's all for today. This is the latest history of the Vympel Special Purpose Group. It goes on, this story. Of course, the second Chechen is not complete without Vympel professionals. There, in Chechnya, two wonderful guys died - Valery Alexandrov and Mikhail Seregin. I really want to talk about their feat and the feats of the fighters of the unit. But not yet.

But time for another. For our reconnaissance and sabotage units have their roots in the depths of centuries, when our state was still in its infancy, and with it intelligence and sabotage service. This story is great and valiant and, really, worthy of being remembered.

Moreover, much will be told for the first time. 166

PART TWO DIVERSE - THE ART OF THE ANCIENTS

In 512 BC, the cunning and powerful Persian king Darius I, who created a gigantic empire from the borders of India to Greece, undertook a campaign against the Scythians - our ancestors. Having crossed the Bosphorus with an army of 700,000, Darius conquered Macedonia and Thrace, crossed the Danube and entered the Scythian steppes of the Black Sea region. The Scythians knew how to fight, but they

did not possess the secret of iron. Their wooden arrows were tipped with bone. Yes, and the forces were not equal. The Persians have a huge army. The Scythian warriors accurately threw darts, deftly shot from

bow, their cavalry could make long and fast transitions.

The strength of their small army and decided to use the Scythians in the war with Darius.

Having learned about the size and armament of the Persian army, the Scythians, together with their families, traveling belongings, herds of cattle, began to retreat, going deep into the endless steppe.

Darius, tired of the long persecution, sent his ambassador to the Scythian king. According to the

historian of ancient Greece Herodotus, the ambassador made such a speech on behalf of the powerful Persian ruler: "Why are you running away? If you think you are stronger than me, then fight me. And if you consider yourself weaker, submit and come to me, your lord, with earth and water in your hands. To which the Scythian king replied: "Out of fear, I did not run away

never from anyone. I still lead the same life that I have always led, and I do not run away from you at all. In our country there are no cities, no gardens, no fields. Therefore, we have nothing to fear that our property will be conquered or devastated by someone. We have nothing to protect. We live in the same way everywhere. Where we are, there is our homeland.

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Darius, the ruler of the world, who conquered Egypt and Babylon, retreated. With the remnants of his army, he set off on his way back to the Danube along the lifeless steppe. The semi-savage

Scythians, who did not own iron, did not know how to read and write, managed to accomplish what was beyond the power of the much more civilized peoples of the ancient world.

What was the basis of their success? Military prowess, courage combined with cunning and intelligence. And the mind, information, knowledge about the enemy - this is intelligence. Take the dictionaries of the Russian language: "to know" - to know, "to explore" - to recognize, accumulate information.

Therefore, intelligence helped the Scythians in the first place. The narratives of the "father of history" Herodotus about the campaign of Darius are also notable for the fact that they tell how the Scythian warriors, on the orders of their king, retreating to the steppe, filled up wells along the way, burned grass. In other words, translating into the modern language of the war, "they committed acts of sabotage on the paths of retreat of the troops." This evidence proves that the craft

of sabotage has as deep historical roots as the art of war in general. And the profession of a scout-saboteur is as old as the world, which has not ceased to fight from the first days of its existence. Back in 882, the prophetic Oleg, descending the Dnieper to the "city of Kyiv" in order to conquer it, sent a ship forward with

scouts. The envoys posed as Greek merchants. It was they who informed the princes Askold and Dir about the embassy that was going to Kyiv to sign the treaty. The princes of Kyiv, suspecting nothing, went to the pier to meet the ambassadors. Oleg went ashore, surrounded by "merchants". In his arms was a young Igor. After an exchange of greetings, Oleg's

"merchants" suddenly attacked the owners and hacked them to death, and the combatants captured Kyiv.

Unfortunately, there are not so many such references in ancient Russian history. For the very concept of "intelligence", in its original, original sense, as the conduct of secret research with a special purpose, has evolved over the centuries. The same can be said about sabotage activities. Only one

thing is indisputable: reconnaissance and sabotage art developed from ancient times as a single whole, as two phases of a common process.

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It is today that our "retired residents" can complain from TV screens that, they say, writers and film directors clearly sin before the truth, overloading their works

excessive chases, fights, shooting.

Well, the residents are probably right, many of them, who worked for more than one year abroad, never had to draw their weapons. The world has changed a lot. And the weapon of intelligence was, first of all, not a pistol, but a cold mind, delicate calculation and high professionalism:

Even today, any reconnaissance officer is not immune from acute, "active" moments, but a reconnaissance saboteur is always at the epicenter of these events. For at the beginning he is an operative, an analyst, at the end he is always a militant. It is immeasurably more difficult. Even in a highly professional unit, employees were secretly ^V "Vympele" ^{the only} ^{our} divided into operatives and militants. Although the best were, of course, "pros" in both. Well, our history has known such examples in the past. In the summer of 1380 in Rus', the "cunning husband" boyar Zakharia Tyutchev was

sent by the Grand Duke of Moscow Dmitry Ivanovich to the Golden Horde. On the way to Mamai, in the land of Ryazan, Zakharia found out about the betrayal of the local prince Oleg and about the union of the Lithuanian prince Jagaila with Mamai. It was he who gathered

an army in Kolomna in order to deliver a preemptive strike and prevent Mamai's regiments from connecting with the squads of Oleg and Jagaila.

And the boyar Tyutchev was waiting for a difficult fate in the camp of Mamai. As the ancient Nikon chronicle tells, the khan threw off his shoe and said: "I will grant you ... what has fallen from my foot."

Zakhary responded boldly to Mamai's attacks, held himself with dignity, and for that he almost lost his life. The fierce murzas from the khan's entourage wanted to deal with him, but Mamai did not allow it. He invited Zachariah to his service. Boyarin agreed, but asked first to send an embassy to Dmitriev.

Mamai wrote a letter to the Prince of Moscow: "Come to me, and have mercy on you." And Tyutchev, accompanied by Tatar murzas, was sent to Dmitry with a message. On the Oka, the Tatar embassy met

with the Russian detachment, and Zakharia tore up the Khan's letter, tied the Murz and returned to Moscow.

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Who is he, by today's standards, Zakharia Tyutchev? A diplomat, a scout who did not evade "active measures", a saboteur? He obtained secret information, passed it on, which made it possible to deliver a preemptive strike, and misled the enemy. His activities were of decisive importance for the fate of the state. And although it is now generally accepted that historical parallels are dangerous, sometimes the connection between the past and

the present is so strong and visible that one is amazed. In fact, should we be surprised?

Our great historian N.M. Karamzin, in one of his works devoted to the study of the Kiev prince Vladimir's campaign against the Greek city of Chersonesos in 988, wrote: "Vladimir, stopping in the harbor, or in the bay of Chersonesos, landed an army and surrounded the city from all sides. Since ancient times

the Chersonesians, bound to freedom, defended themselves courageously.

The Grand Duke threatened them to stand under the walls for three years if they did not surrender, but the townspeople rejected his proposal, hoping, perhaps, to have an ambulance from the Greeks.

Fortunately, there was a well-wisher to Vladimir named Anastas in the city. This man shot an arrow towards the Russians with the inscription: "Behind you, to the east, there are wells that give water to the Chersonesos through underground pipes: you can take it away."

The Grand Duke hastened to take advantage of the advice and ordered to dig up water pipes (of which traces are still visible near the current ruins of Chersonesus). Then the citizens, exhausted by thirst, surrendered to the Russians."

I recalled this Karamzin study recently when I heard a story about the Vympel exercises, during which the soldiers of the unit turned off the electricity of one of the military factories, committing sabotage far outside the city. Local security at this time, disguised as janitors with brooms and shovels, cordoned off the town around the entire perimeter, patiently waiting for the "terrorists".

The guards did not wait for anything, and the plant, like the ancient Chersonese, fell, having lost electricity. The history of intelligence, and with it the sabotage service, developed slowly in Rus'. There were many reasons for this: here is the long-term dependence of the state on the Golden Horde. After all, a hundred years have passed since the Battle of Kulikovo before Rus' finally freed itself from the Tatar-Mongol yoke.

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There is fragmentation, endless feuds between the princes, their struggle for power. During this period, the main enemy was often not a Khan Tatar, but a relative from a neighboring or his own principality - an uncle, brother, nephew.

And only under Ivan III Russia, as N.M. Karamzin, emerged from the "darkness of shadows", the unification of disparate principalities into a single state began.

And the state, as you know, cannot live without... diplomacy. Yes, yes, without the "embassy case". For at that time, under Ivan III, and even later under Ivan IV the Terrible, no one talked about intelligence. It certainly exists. But it is part of the "embassy case".

Is there evidence for this? Eat. And quite curious. A certain Litvin, apparently a resident of Lithuania, wrote: "We have a large number of Moscow defectors who, having found out our affairs, means and customs, freely return to theirs while they are with us, secretly convey our plans to theirs ...

This cunning man (Ivan IV) appointed a reward for returning defectors, even empty and useless: a slave - freedom, a commoner - nobility, a debtor - forgiveness of debts, an absolution of guilt to a villain ... " Apparently, Ivan the Terrible valued defectors and rewarded them according

to -royally. He knew a lot about intelligence information, if he even complained about "empty and useless."

By the way, even then the tradition of intimacy was born.

intelligence to the first person of the state. Here is how V.O. Klyuchevsky. "It (we are talking about the Ambassadorial Order. - M.B.) remains an institution very close to the sovereign, as if his own office for foreign affairs: leaving Moscow, the tsar takes with him his or, rather, his department, along with his manager deacon." It was possible to become diplomats and scouts (both assignments were often carried out by the

same people) only by becoming a person close to the tsar. Only to him could the sovereign entrust the main secrets of the country.

This tradition remained with us until the Khrushchev era, that is, until the middle of this century.

Stalin, sending scouts on important missions, personally instructed them, gave orders himself. So, in 1939, Stalin summoned Beria and Sudoplatov to his Kremlin and instructed to liquidate Trotsky within a year, and in October 1941

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he himself instructed the future resident in Washington, Zarubin, before he was sent to the United States. Stalin

sometimes delved into the smallest details of the operations. So, in order to discredit a prominent figure in the Bolshevik Party, Yuri Pyatakov, he gave instructions directly to the head of the INO Slutsky. Here is how the intelligence officer Alexander Orlov, who fled to the West, tells

about this case in his book. "Listening at a conference in the Kremlin to a report on the confessions made by Pyatakov,

Stalin asked: would it not be better to write in the indictment that Pyatakov received Trotsky's directives not by mail, but during a personal meeting with him? Thus was born the legend that Pyatakov flew to Norway on a date with Trotsky. To make the version more convincing, Stalin ordered: let the head of the Foreign Directorate of the NKVD, Slutsky, develop a scheme for Pyatakov's travel from Berlin to Norway, taking into account the Berlin-Oslo train schedule. When Slutsky and I met in Paris, at Professor Bergeret's sanatorium (this happened in February 1937), he told me what happened at the next Kremlin meeting on the Pyatakov case.

Slutsky reported to Stalin that the data he had collected did not allow accepting the version of Pyatakov's personal trip to Norway. The fact is that according to the current schedule, Pyatakov's trip to Oslo, given the time required to get from Oslo to Veksal, where Trotsky lived, and talk with him, will take at least two days. It would be very dangerous to say that Pyatakov disappeared from Berlin for such a long time: according to the Soviet trade mission in Berlin, he held daily meetings there with representatives of various German firms and signed contracts with them almost every day.

Stalin was dissatisfied with Slutsky's report and, without waiting for the presentation of all the minuses of the legend under discussion, objected:

"Maybe what you say about train schedules is really true. However, Pyatakov could fly to Oslo by plane, too? A round-trip flight, perhaps, can be done in one night? Slutsky noticed that the plane (let's not forget that the flight should

was dated 1935) takes very few passengers

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and the name of each of them is recorded in the airline's log. But Stalin had already made his decision: "It must be pointed out that Pyatakov flew in a special aircraft. For such a case, the German authorities would gladly give an airplane! As you know, the Stalinist version burst like

a soap bubble. On January 25, 1937, two days after the story was told to the court, an article appeared in the Norwegian newspaper Aftenposten under the heading: "Pyatakov's meeting with Trotsky in Oslo looks completely implausible." Further, the note said that Pyatakov allegedly arrived by plane at the Heller airfield. However, airfield personnel claim that no civilian aircraft landed there in December 1935. However, this did not bother Stalin. Pyatakov was executed.

This is modern history. But let us return to the origins of our intelligence. Indeed, it was not easy to become close to the king at that time if you were not rich, if you did not give birth. That is why in the galaxy

of the first Russian professionals there are undoubtedly outstanding, talented, versatile, major figures of their time.

Among them, the first head of the diplomatic service of Ivan the Terrible, the clerk of the Ambassadorial Department, Ivan Viskovaty. The historian A. Gvagnini called him "an excellent husband, outstanding in mind and many virtues, the chancellor."

This is Athanasius Ordin-Nashchokin, a petty nobleman from the provincial town of Opochna, who knew languages, mathematics, and mechanics. Tsar Mikhail Fedorovich noticed him. And now Athanasius is in Moldova, and reports are coming to Moscow about anti-Russian speeches in the Sejm of Poland, about the intention of the Crimean khans to make a campaign against Moscow, about the perfidy of the Lithuanian princes.

Upon his return from Moldova, he deals with Poland and Denmark, and later works in the Baltic states as a real military intelligence officer. The finest hour of his diplomatic

and intelligence art is the conclusion of the Andrusov Treaty of 1667 between Russia and Poland, according to which Russia returned its ancestral territories - the Smolensk and Chernigov provinces, Seversk land. Russia received thirteen years of truce with Poland and the right to govern Kiev.

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After this success, by a special decree of the king Ordin Nashchokin is appointed head of the Ambassadorial Department.

Artamon Matveev, a statesman, prominent diplomat, talented intelligence officer, military leader, writer, historian, founder of

Russian court theater

Today, the name of this undoubtedly great man is almost forgotten, and yet it was he who stood at the origins of the historical event - the reunification of Ukraine and Russia. Now, centuries

later, everything seems clear and obvious. However, Ukraine of the 17th century was a complex interweaving of the most contradictory social forces and trends. The Turks, Poles, and Moldavians looked longingly at the Ukrainian lands. During these years, Bogdan Khmelnytsky appeared, declaring himself the hetman of

Ukraine. He joined the fight against the Commonwealth and turned to Moscow with a request to take him under the Russian wing. The Muscovite tsar had many questions, and first of all, who was this new hetman - an

adventurer or a bright historical figure.

Rumors about Khmelnytsky reached the most contradictory, and the king of the Muscovites did not want to make a mistake. And then Artamon Matveev left for Ukraine at the head of the Russian embassy. It was he who had to clarify the situation and report his thoughts to the king. The work done by Matveev is difficult to

fit into the framework of diplomacy or intelligence. He showed himself to be a talented and wise statesman - the Russian embassy supported the desire of the Ukrainians to reunite with the Russians.

On January 8-9, 1654, the Cossack Rada took place in Pereslavl, at which the reunification was solemnly proclaimed. Artamon Matveev was a guest of the Rada. Among the greatest Russian diplomats

and intelligence officers, one cannot fail to mention the name of Prince Andrei Khilkov, whose fate is an example of selfless service to the motherland. Prince Andrei was educated in Italy, studied

navigation, shipbuilding, and languages. He returned to Russia in 1700, on the eve of the war with Sweden, and soon departed abroad with a special assignment from the tsar.

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Peter was preparing for war and tried his best to lull the vigilance of Charles XII. With the most difficult task Khilkov left for Stockholm - he had to convince the Swedish monarch of the peacefulness of the Russian tsar.

But Karl was not in the capital, he left for Denmark. Khilkov rushed after him. In two weeks, he covered almost 600 miles, caught up with the king on the road and was awarded an audience. In excellent Latin,

which at that time was held in high esteem in Europe, he made an impassioned speech, forcing Karl to believe in the peacefulness of Russia. Khilkov soon presented his credentials to

Charles XII. By the will of fate, it happened that on the same day Peter I decided to declare war.

The Swedish king was shocked by the "cunning of the Muscovites." The anger of the monarch fell on Khilkov's head - his property was sealed, and he himself was put under arrest in the house, which he

rented under the embassy. The prince did not yet know his fate, which would arrange so that he would not see his native shores.

For almost two decades, under the vigilant control of the Swedes, he will find the opportunity to transfer intelligence information to Moscow, helping Russian prisoners. Prince Khilkov will not live only six months until

the day when all the prisoners will be returned to Russia under the Aland truce. His body will be delivered to his homeland in a lead coffin and buried with the highest officer honors in the new capital of Russia - St. Petersburg. The era of Peter the Great is characterized not only by the traditional use of official diplomatic

representatives for intelligence purposes, such as Prince Andrei Khilkov or Artamon Matveev, but also by the fact that intelligence work acquired a legal status. This status is enshrined in the new military regulations of Tsar Peter. Intelligence is now part of the Quartermaster General Service.

An important stage in the development and formation of the Russian reconnaissance and sabotage service are the reforms of the Minister of War M.B. Barclay de Tolly. He sends the first so-called "military agents" to Russian diplomatic missions abroad. For the first time obtaining a military-political secret

information is put on a solid, professional basis.

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Employees of the "Special Office" now carry out intelligence work as the main one, and not along with diplomatic work, as was the case in Russia before. The "office" is headed by a close friend of Barclay de

Tolly, adjutant wing A. Voeikov. It is he who selects "military agents" to send to Europe: Lieutenant P. Brozin to Madrid, Lieutenant P. Grabbe to Munich, Major V. Prendl to Dresden, Lieutenant G. Orlov to Vienna.

And a military officer, the future Minister of War of Russia Alexander Chernyshev, is going to Paris with a letter from Alexander I to Napoleon. He is the personal representative of the Russian emperor at Napoleon's military headquarters during the French military operations against Prussia and Austria. Since 1810, Chernyshev has

been constantly at the court of Napoleon. All of Paris learned about his bravery and courage when Alexander Ivanovich during a terrible fire in the house of the Austrian ambassador

carried a few people out of the fire.

The information that Chernyshev supplied from the Napoleonic capital on the eve of the war between Russia and France was very valuable. In a short time, our "military agent" created a network of informers, among whom was a certain Michel, an employee of Napoleon's military department. "Chernyshev's man," as Michel, who was later exposed, was called, twice a month handed him copies of documents on the size and deployment of the army. Colonel Chernyshev added his thoughts and observations to them. With the outbreak of the war of 1812, Alexander Ivanovich Chernyshev -

in the active Russian army. It should be emphasized that Chernyshev was among those who stood at the origins of the deployment of the partisan and sabotage movement behind enemy lines.

The professional knowledge and experience of the scout helped him become one of the best partisan commanders. For services to the Fatherland, Chernyshev receives the title of prince and the rank of general from the cavalry.

In 1832, the former intelligence officer, partisan, saboteur Alexander Chernyshev became Minister of War and held this post for two decades.

The war of 1812 brought forward a galaxy of glorious scouts. Unfortunately, many of them are forgotten by our historians.

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It is enough to name a close friend of the partisan commander Denis Davydov - Alexander Figner.

Davydov was more fortunate, the current generation knows him. But Figner was none other than an illegal intelligence officer. He was fluent in French and pretended to be either a French officer or an Italian merchant. This helped him learn and see a lot. Figner often found himself in the most difficult, risky, truly dramatic situations and always got out of them with honor.

However, the post-war period of the last century is also rich in large intelligence officers. Take, for example, the wife of the Minister of War of Russia, the favorite of Emperor Paul, Count Christopher Lieven - Daria Liven. She is also nee Daria Benkendorf, sister of the famous police chief.

She was brought up at the Smolny Institute, after which she was granted the maid of honor of Empress Maria Feodorovna. And although Dasha was not distinguished by beauty, she was smart, observant, sociable. From childhood, being close to the reigning persons, she knew the customs of the court, was aware of all the intrigues and gossip. In 1812, Count Lieven was sent as ambassador to Great

Britain. In London, his wife creates a salon that soon became famous. Politicians and diplomats come here with pleasure. Now Daria Khristoforovna is aware of all political news. She informs Foreign Minister Nesselrode about the nuances of this news. Of particular interest to the minister is the correspondence between Daria Lieven and the Austrian

Chancellor Metternich, who were on close terms. This secret channel of information is soon taken under control by Emperor Alexander I himself. In 1825, Alexander I hatches secret plans for a sharp turn in foreign policy - a departure from Austria and rapprochement with England. Before taking this step, the emperor invites Daria Lieven to Petersburg and has a long confidential conversation with her. Soon Daria Khristoforovna receives an order: to break with Metternich and get closer to the British Foreign Minister, who later became Prime Minister, George Canning. Once again, she has to become a secret agent of Russia...

Our country, being a Eurasian country, along with
The West has always paid great attention in its foreign
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politics of Asia. After the tragic death of A. Griboyedov in Tehran, the representative of Nicholas I, Major General Dolgorukov, who came to Persia to settle the incident with the defeat of the Russian mission, will write: "In Asia it is not the same as in Europe. Here every day there is a change in thought and quite often in action. In order not to give a bad turn to affairs and in order to sometimes have time to prevent any actions, one must be promptly and correctly notified. ... It is necessary ... to appoint an amount in order to find one or two Persian officials who would deliver the faithful

news..."

Such an amount was assigned, and an intelligence network was deployed. Our scouts will soon strengthen their positions not only in Persia and Afghanistan, but also in China and India.

An example of this is the activities of the captain of the Ural Cossack army David Livkin. He was a highly educated person: he spoke English, Tatar, Kyrgyz, studied international and Muslim law.

Livkin, with a passport in the name of the merchant Mohammed Hasanov, left for India. But it was impossible to go through Afghanistan, this would have attracted the attention of British intelligence, and therefore his path lay in Vienna, from there to Egypt and India.

Livkin's task was not easy. The fact is that a plague epidemic broke out in India, and this caused serious concern for the Russian government. A special commission is being created, and quarantine detachments are deployed on the border with Afghanistan. However, their arrangement in remote, hard-to-reach areas required huge sums from

treasury.

In turn, there was no accurate information about the epidemiological situation in India and in the border areas of Afghanistan. And this means that it is impossible to determine the amount of costs and carry out anti-plague measures. David Livkin had to find out the true state of affairs and report it to St.

Petersburg. To fulfill this peculiar task, the scout had to carry out a large complex of complex operational measures: to find and explore areas corresponding to the spread of the plague, to study the population flows that move from India to Afghanistan, Persia and Central Asia. Finally, draw a conclusion and give competent recommendations Petersburg. assistants to a special commission in St.

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During his stay "on a business trip" David Livkin visited Port Said, Ceylon. In India, he visited the city of Karachi, where the most dangerous focus of the epidemic was located. Here, the death rate reached more than three dozen cases a day. After that, the scout goes to Bombay, also a major focus of the epidemic.

Based on the collected data, he concludes that

the British and Indian authorities are skillfully and skillfully fighting the epidemic, and this is bearing fruit. At the same time, he finds the only channel through which the plague can get from India to Central Asia - this is Kashmir and the upper Indus valley. But this channel has already been blocked by enhanced border controls. Returning to St. Petersburg, he proposes to the commission to suspend the

formation of quarantine detachments along the Afghan border due to the absence of a real danger of the spread of the plague to the territory of Central Asia. Thus, thanks to the selfless work of intelligence officer Livkin, Russia saved large financial resources.

These are just a few names, a few fates of the first Russian intelligence officers and diplomats. By the way, most of these fates are deeply tragic. Ivan Viskovaty was executed on the slander of enemies as

a "conspirator", Ordin-Nashchokin was removed from the leadership of the order and exiled to Pskov, Artamon Matveev died on the peaks of the archers, protecting the young Tsar Peter, Prince Andrei Khilkov died of tuberculosis far from his homeland. David Livkin received a severe concussion near Mukden, lost his speech, and was chained to the bed for a long time. He was retired with the rank of colonel.

In the last years of his life, he was in distress. Due to bureaucratic delays, he did not always receive a small pension. Livkin repeatedly asked to establish the pension due to his merits and rank, but was not heard.

In 1912, he wrote to the sovereign: "... At the present time I have come to St. Petersburg again to consult with doctors. I don't have money for the return trip ... Being in a critical situation, again and again I allow myself to resort to your mercy, Great Sovereign ... "It is not known whether the scout waited for the sovereign's mercy

Livkin. He soon died.

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Only Alexander Ivanovich Chernyshev falls out of this list. He ends his career as chairman of the State Council. They were followed by other, no less striking figures - Yakov

Tolstoy, Nikolai Ignatiev, Alfred Redel. Intelligence has always been strong in personalities.

"CONSPIRACY OF THE AMBASSADORS"

The 20th century presented new requirements for intelligence. And intelligence by that time largely met these requirements. Military issues are of particular importance. Therefore, all information flows to the Statistical Department of the Quartermaster General of the General Staff. Of course, "extras" perform purely intelligence functions - from control over the recruitment of agents to the collection and processing of military

strategic materials on the armies of potential opponents. In 1903, this intelligence center receives

a new "roof". Now it is called the 7th branch of the military strategic department. The state also closes on the quartermaster general. The eve of the Russo-Japanese War is not an easy time for intelligence, and, first of all, because of scarce

funding. I will name just a few figures. The General Staff is allocated 56,000 rubles annually under the 6th estimate ("hidden" intelligence expenses). This money was sparsely distributed among the military districts. "Lucky" got 10,000-12,000 rubles each,

the rest even less.

For comparison, I'll say that Japan, preparing for a war with Russia, spent 12 million rubles on its agents

gold.

Hence the deplorable results. Colonel Gurko of the General Staff described our intelligence on Japan on the eve of the war as follows: "Our information about Japan's military preparations against Russia was simply ugly."

In fairness, it must be said that not all intelligence worked as poorly as in the Japanese direction. Thus, anticipating a war with Germany, the General Staff sends its most capable, most experienced professionals there.

The group of Colonel A.

Michelson. She took up recruiting agents among employees

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kov and technical personnel of a number of leading German firms that carried out army orders. Mikhelson to organize

"internships" for artillery specialists and electrical engineers of the engineering department of the Russian army in such major centers of the German military industry as the Carl Zeiss Jena factory, the Krupp Rheinmetall plants.

It suffices to give a classic example with the agent of our intelligence officer, Captain M. Kostevich, when a German specialist from the secret design bureau handed over the drawings of the latest howitzers, forgetting to warn that he was handing over not copies, but originals.

The agent was arrested. Kostevich also ended up in prison for a while, and Mikhelson was declared "persona non grata" and expelled from Germany. On the eve of the war and until

1917, our intelligence launched its tentacles even on the African continent. The war in Africa provided serious food for thought and analysis. There the British first used automatic weapons, new explosives. Therefore, in Russia they were keenly interested in events on the distant "black" continent. The names of some of those who supplied objective information are known - this is A Guchkov, the future chairman of the State Duma, the famous Russian poet N. Gumilyov.

The revolution of 1917 turned the fate of many Russians scouts, as well as the fate of intelligence itself.

For many years in our press, literature, scientific research it was argued that the Bolshevik intelligence had nothing in common with the tsarist, bourgeois intelligence. Like, she grew up on her own, solely thanks to the talent of her creators Dzerzhinsky, Menzhinsky, Trilisser, Artuzov, relying on the rich experience of illegal work of the Bolshevik Party. This, of course, is not true. Yes, the fate of that "tsarist" intelligence is tragic, many employees of the quartermaster general service, illegal agents did not accept Bolshevism, moreover, they fought against it. But there were others. So, the head of the foreign intelligence department, Lieutenant General Nikolai Potapov, went over to the side of the Bolsheviks and

already in November 1917 became the chief of the General Staff. There were also those who passed on their experience to the "new communist

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kim" to scouts. And among them was an officer of the tsarist intelligence A. Lutsky. Until 1917, he successfully worked in Japan, and with the creation of the Cheka, he taught the secrets of undercover work to young employees. By the way, the future head of INO M. Trilisser gained experience and knowledge from Lutsky. In 1920, Lutsky was sent to the Far East. He is Primorye, was captured, led counterintelligence by the White Guards and executed. Lutsky, together with S. Lazo, was burned in the

furnace of a steam locomotive. It turns out that the so-called Foreign Department (INO) of the Cheka did two centers that were engaged in intelligence and not rise from scratch. Namely, he was one of the sabotage abroad. The department collected intelligence through its agents who had diplomatic cover or worked in trade missions. INO

also had illegal channels. Of course, special attention was paid to obtaining information about the activities of governments, individual citizens, public organizations, private corporations that finance the activities of emigrants, Whites in Europe, the Far East, and China. The department consisted of departments that oversaw

certain countries or groups of countries. In addition, the INO had specialists in scientific, technical and economic problems. All these divisions were engaged in the generalization and analysis of data coming from foreign residencies. Illegal intelligence was considered the leading direction, because trade

quantity our diplomatic And
representation at that time was very small. INO was run by different people.

Experienced, capable, energetic, who did a lot for the formation of the department - Artuzov, Slutsky. This is Slutsky, a talented head of intelligence, who developed and carried out the operation to recruit the "Cambridge Five", created a large "intelligence cluster" in the Far East.

But there were also those like Dekanozov, who headed the center with the arrival of Beria in the NKVD. He did not understand much about the intricacies of foreign intelligence, because before his appointment to the INO, Dekanozov worked as a supplier in the Baku GPU, later in Georgia he was a "commissar" in the People's Commissariat of the Food Industry. Loved a beautiful life, luxury. The fate of many managers

and employees of the department ended in the cellars of the Lubyanka. Caught under the wheel of repression

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Artuzov, Passov, Shpigelglas, who at various times headed the INO. At an early stage

of its activity, the INO conducts several rather "loud" and well-prepared operations, and first of all uncovers the "conspiracy of ambassadors".

Already on September 1, 1918, the head of the British mission in Russia, Robert Bruce Lockhart, was arrested at his apartment in Khlebny Lane. The court sentences him to capital punishment. A British diplomat has been charged with plotting to overthrow Soviet power and kill its leaders. However, Lockhart was not executed. Soon he was exchanged for M. Litvinov, the future head of the Foreign

Ministry of the Soviet Union, who was arrested in England. In the 1930s, Lockhart would write a memoir in which he

completely deny their guilt.

Later, the son of Robert Lockhart, Robin, will publish a book about the famous English intelligence officer Sydney Reilly and, of course, devote many pages to his father in it. They really worked

together - an experienced spy Reilly and his younger colleague Lockhart. On this, Lockhart Jr. will build his reasoning: they say, an inexperienced diplomat, who also loved Russia very much, gets into the nets set by the sinister British intelligence services. Moreover, these networks were not set up by anyone, but by the "king of spies" himself. In the early 1980s, the diaries of Robert Lockhart will finally be published, but they will not bring

clarity, especially since they do not contain entries of the most important month - August 1918. As if he did not exist at all in the life of an English diplomat.

All these mysteries of the time gave food to some unscrupulous, quick-to-hand historians and publicists for conjectures and statements: the innocent Lockhart almost became a victim of the criminal Bolshevik regime. The conclusions were made downright historical: they say that

the roots of future Stalinist repressions grow precisely from here, from 1918, from an ardent desire to destroy a true friend of Russia.

Well, the cynicism of those who reshape the history of our country cannot but amaze. And therefore, to circumvent this controversial historical fact means to leave in force the accusations against the Russian special services. Moreover, the proof

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evidence of the direct involvement of Mr. Lockhart in the upcoming anti-state coup in Russia is in

archives.

Generally speaking, for our Chekists from the very beginning of 1918, there was nothing obscure in the "conspiracy of ambassadors". After all, the entire operation to expose the criminal activities of foreign diplomats - England's envoy Lockhart, French Consul General Grenar and US Consul General Poole - was prepared by employees who later formed the basis of the Foreign Department.

And this operation began with the first alarming signals about the illegal actions of diplomats. On the instructions of F.

Dzerzhinsky and J. Peters, the VChK agent Yakov Buikis, the operational pseudonym "Schmidchen", enters into the confidence of Lockhart. He also introduces the English envoy to the key figure of the future operation, the commander of the artillery battalion of the Latvian riflemen, Eduard Berzin.

Later, in his report, E. Berzin writes: "Schmidchen introduced me to Lockhart. The essence of Lockhart's questions boiled down to finding out what the mood of the Latvian units was and whether they could be counted on during the coup. Then he said that it was necessary to work in the direction that the Latvian Riflemen would rise up against the Soviet government and overthrow it. At the same time, Lockhart strongly and repeatedly emphasized that money would not be the issue. At the end of our conversation, he said that our riflemen could be turned against the Soviet

regime if they were not given the products that we now badly need.

At parting, he ordered me to come in the next day in the evening, then he will introduce me to his French colleague and agent, who is constantly in Moscow, while he often leaves.

This conversation took place on 13 August. And two days later Berzin was again at Lockhart's apartment in Khlebny Lane.

"He met me very kindly," the Latvian shooter reported, "and introduced me to the French consul general and his agent Reilly. I don't know the name of the consul. Lockhart introduced Reilly to me as "Constantine"; that he is Reilly, he told me later. The French consul addressed me through Lockhart with the following words: judging by your conversation yesterday with the Ambassador, you are very interested in the fate of Latvia. If we, the allies, succeed

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to take it away from the Germans, we, although we do not have special powers from our governments, can still promise you a reward for your assistance to self-determination in the full sense of the word ... They said that it would be necessary to immediately start organizing a national party, which would become our guiding center. Then they asked me how many Latvian troops were in Moscow, and they said that it would be necessary to arrange so that no more Latvian riflemen were sent to the front from Moscow. Like the last time, they started talking about money and asked how much is needed to bribe the

commanders of the Latvian

parts."

Further events developed as follows. Berzin's next meeting with Reilly took place on 17 August. In the evening they sat in a cafe, then went out for a walk along Tsvetnoy Boulevard. Now concrete actions were demanded from the commander of the artillery

battalion: to arrange so that two Latvian regiments were sent to Vologda and there went over to the side

allies.

At the same time, the rest of the bribed shooters were to arrest Lenin, Trotsky and other Bolshevik leaders right at the meeting of the Central Executive Committee and take them to prison. Along with this, the State Bank, the central telephone exchange and the telegraph should be seized. And then - to maintain order in the city until arrival

British military authorities.

"Then he offered me to rent a secret apartment and handed over the package, saying that it contained 700,000 rubles. Then we agreed that on August 19 he would come to me ...

... He told me that he was well acquainted with Patriarch Tikhon, at the same time he noted that this was a very big secret, and besides, he said that Father Tikhon promised the next day after the coup to arrange a service in all churches, where he would explain people that the long-awaited peace has come and that there is no one to fear for their lives, as it was until now. The plans of the conspirators did not stop only at the preparation of the rebellion. Reilly talked about how, after the arrest of the Bolshevik leaders, detachments of officers

should be assembled who would carry out commandant service in the city, maintain order and discipline. The British agent consulted with Berzin whether it would not be better to shoot Lenin and Trotsky on the day of the coup. Reilly was afraid that they might persuade the guards who would protect them.

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I think the report of the commander of the artillery division, Eduard Berzin, eloquently testifies to the vigorous activity of foreign diplomats and their henchman Reilly. And if Berzin seems to someone to be too interested and biased, then there are other documents

proving Lockhart's extremely great interest in overthrowing the Bolshevik government. These documents are from the British National Archives.

Here is just one fragment from an analysis of the situation in Soviet Russia, provided in November 1918 to Foreign Minister D. Balfour:

"Immediately deploy a wide intervention, strengthen our troops in Siberia and the North. At the same time, having ensured Turkey's exit from the war, send expeditionary troops across the Black Sea, join General Alekseev and directly march on Moscow, strike at the very heart of Bolshevism. The author of this very unequivocal proposal is none other than Mr. Lockhart. Less than a month after its exchange for

Litvinov and return to England, and he is already strongly advising the British Cabinet to "march on Moscow and strike ..." "By restoring order in Russia," Lockhart continues,

"we will immediately not only prevent the spread of Bolshevism as a political danger, but for Europe, the rich fruitful regions of the Ukraine, which, if half-measures are taken or if they are inactive, will be given over to anarchy and revolution ... A successful intervention will give the Allies a dominant position in Russia ... Allied intervention is the guarantee of this order. No other policy will produce such results or ensure them." There are other data that give full grounds to say that the "conspiracy of ambassadors" is not a provocation of the Cheka, and Robert Lockhart is not a naive young envoy, an adherent of Russia. These data can be, for example, a detailed study of Russian counter-revolutionary organizations with which the ambassadors kept in touch. By the way, the study is quite deep and objective. It describes the "volunteer army" of General Alekseev, the "right center" oriented towards the Cadets, the "left center" uniting the right SRs and Mensheviks.

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Lockhart assigns a special place to Boris Savinkov and his Union for the Defense of the Motherland and Freedom.

Interestingly, the British envoy knows both the "pluses" and "minuses" of each organization and warns his government about them. Well, in conclusion, I would like to add: despite

the experience of Reilly and the ardent desire of foreign diplomats to stage a coup, they did not succeed in Moscow. Operation "Syndicate" was also a great victory for the Cheka, as a result of which it was possible to lure the "great terrorist" Boris Savinkov from abroad.

On August 21, 1924, in his written testimony to the investigation, Savinkov wrote: "I, Boris Savinkov, am a former member of the combat organization of the AKP (party of socialist revolutionaries (Socialist-Revolutionaries) - a friend and comrade of Yegor ~~Mr. Solz~~ ^{Mr. Solz}onov and Ivan Kalyaev, a participant in the murder of Plehve, Grand Duke Sergei Alexandrovich, participant in many other terrorist

acts."

Many others are punitive detachments, gangs of robbers, scum, hirelings, commanded by Savinkov. His path was smoky with conflagrations, was covered with the blood of the executed. He rushed from the British to the French, from them to the White Czechs and the White Poles. The transcript of Savinkov's trial occupies one hundred and fifty

pages. Nearly every count of the indictment deserves capital punishment. In the first years of "perestroika", in an ardent desire to turn everything upside down, literary critics and historians liked to delve "in the soul" of Savinkov, creating

bloody terrorist aura of romance. Then, in these articles, an opinion appeared, they say, it was not the Chekists who lured Savinkov from abroad, he himself went to the voice of a certain "decoy". According to one of the authors, this "calling" was the new economic policy of Bolshevik Russia. It turns out that Savinkov returned to his homeland to pay respect to the Bolsheviks for the NEP?

Let's try to figure out what became the real "calling" for the "great terrorist". After the October Revolution, Savinkov lives in Paris. The centers of his "Union for the Defense of the Motherland and Freedom" operate in Warsaw, Vilna and, of course, in France. Under the direct supervision of Dzerzhinsky and Menzhinsky, the operation "Syndicate" is being developed, the purpose of which is

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agents of the Cheka under the guise of members of an illegal anti-Soviet organization began to penetrate into the Savinkov centers.

At the beginning of 1922, a prominent figure in the Union, Savinkov's personal adjutant - Sheshen, was captured on the Soviet-Polish border. He gives out valuable information about Savinkov's organization, indicates appearances in Moscow and Smolensk. On

the basis of Sheshenya's data, the Chekists arrest two more Soyuz emissaries, Zekunov and Gerasimov. Sheshenya and Zekunov agree to work for the Cheka. Soon an employee of the Foreign

Department, Fedorov, leaves for Warsaw with Zekunov. He pretends to be an active member of an anti-Soviet organization. In Warsaw, Fedorov gives the leaders of the regional center Sheshenya's

report on the work done. The Center is willing to cooperate. Soon the representative of the Warsaw center Fomichev and Fedorov leave for Paris.

Here they are warmly

received by Savinkov. Subsequently, Savinkov introduces Fedorov to his friends and closest associates: Colonel Pavlovsky and intelligence officer Sydney Reilly.

However, the "great terrorist" was not so simple as to be taken at his word. Pavlovsky is thrown into Russia. In the autumn of 1923, he appears at Sheshen's apartment. His distrust, questions alerted the Chekists. The head of INO Artuzov proposes to arrest Pavlovsky. Which is what was done.

Savinkov suspects nothing. At this time, he is busy negotiating with "Intelligence Service" - British intelligence. However, Savinkov's friend Reilly does not

sleep. He meets with Fedorov and asks for a long time about the Moscow organization, about the situation in Russia in general, and even hints that he would not mind visiting Moscow. After long conversations with Fedorov and Fomichev, Savinkov

himself decides to go to Russia.

In August 1924, Savinkov, with a false passport, along with the spouses Derenthal and Fomichev, crossed the Soviet-Polish border.

At the border they are met by Fedorov, who has left several earlier, employees of the OGPU Pilyar, Puzitsky, Grikman.

Pilyar is presented to Savinkov as the commander of the frontier post, "sympathizing with the organization", the rest as members of the Moscow center. 188

On the way, it was decided to separate: Savinkov and Derenthal were accompanied by Puzitsky.

They arrived in Minsk, and Puzitsky escorted them to the apartment. They say that in Minsk Savinkov's mood changed dramatically. He became withdrawn, wary. However, following Puzitsky, he entered the house, where he was arrested. Less than two weeks later, Savinkov appeared before

Military Collegium of the Supreme Court of the USSR.

Everything he said in the meeting room shocked the world public. The "great terrorist" recognized the Bolsheviks.

- After a hard and long bloody struggle with you, a struggle in which I did, perhaps, more than many, many others, I tell you: I come here and declare without coercion, freely, not because they stand with rifles for back: I unconditionally recognize Soviet power and no other," he said.

He was sentenced to death with confiscation. Later, the "tower" was replaced with ten years in prison. In 1925,

Savinkov wrote to Dzerzhinsky: "I remember your conversation in August. You were right: it is not enough to be disappointed in the Whites or the Greens, you must also understand and appreciate the Reds. A lot of time has passed since then. I changed my mind a lot in prison, and I'm ashamed to say that I learned a lot. I appeal to you, citizen Dzerzhinsky, - if you believe me,

release me and give me a job, no matter what, even the most subordinate ...
"

There is a version that this letter was never handed over to Dzerzhinsky. And soon the newspapers reported Savinkov's suicide. There are also differences

in this regard. According to the official version, Boris Savinkov jumped out of a prison window and fell to his death.

But there is evidence that Savinkov's son Viktor Uspensky, who came on dates, once heard from his father: they will say that I killed myself - do not believe it. Who knows what really happened?

This time, the still very young special services of Soviet Russia outplayed their highly experienced rivals. How did events develop further? More on this in the next chapter.

YAKOV SEREBRYANSKII AND THE "SPECIAL GROUP"

The second center of reconnaissance and sabotage was the Special Group under the chairman of the OGPU, nicknamed by the name of its leader in Chekist circles the "Yasha group".

It was completely independent and independent of the INO in its activities. It was created in 1926 by Vyacheslav Menzhinsky, Dzerzhinsky's successor. The main tasks of the Special Group are deep undercover penetration of the enemy's military-strategic facilities and the preparation of sabotage operations in Europe and Japan in case of war. For ten years, the group was headed by State Security Major Yakov Serebryansky.

It was he, with a minimum number of operatives (and there were no more than two dozen of them in the group), who created an extensive network of illegal immigrants ready to carry out sabotage behind enemy lines in Western Europe, China, the USA, Palestine ...

The "Yasha Group" relied only on illegal agents. She did not have her employees in diplomatic missions and trade missions. An experienced and, of course,

talented intelligence organizer Yakov Serebryansky lived a tragic life full of anxieties and dangers.

Everything that happened to him is like a fantastic action movie. So, for ten years, Major of State Security Serebryansky sculpted and created, essentially, from scratch, an intelligence and sabotage service. It was his people

who kidnapped General Kutepov in Paris in 1930. Three agents, disguised as French gendarmerie officers, stopped the general allegedly to check documents and forced him into a car.

Kutepov resisted, and during the struggle he suffered a heart attack and died. This is one of the versions. There are others. Where, the truth, where the lie, so far no one has been able to find out. In 1937, Serebryansky developed and

carried out an operation to seize the archives of Leon Trotsky, which were hidden in Paris. Agent Zborovsky, nicknamed "Tulip", put them on their trail, and another agent, "Harry", captured them and took them to Moscow.

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In general, the life of Yakov Serebryansky, as well as anyone who served at that time in the security agencies, is an interweaving of sinful and righteous, tragic and cruel, light and dark. Yes, there was the abduction and death of General Kutepov, but there was also a "deep settling" agent, who was personally trained and led by Serebryansky. The agent lived in San Francisco. At one time, he received money from us to graduate from a medical college in France. The need for it arose in 1942, when the agent, as a dentist, was close to the family of Oppenheimer, the "father" of the American atomic bomb. How to put these two intelligence operations on the scales, what moral standards to measure

them, what to put at the forefront? Then, in the 20s and 30s, everything that the Special Group did seemed to be a boon for the Fatherland, today there is a different view, different assessments, different guidelines.

Do we have the right to judge Serebryansky and his

employees? Complex issue. To which, perhaps, there is no definite answer. Moreover, this moral problem will constantly arise in the course of further narration. How to get away from the historical fact that, in essence, the hand that prepared the assassination of Trotsky executed the bloody fascist executioner of Cuba, that from a single center, the same people led the arrest and delivery to Moscow of Latvian Foreign Minister Munters in 1940 and sent the activities of the Red Chapel, Kim Philby, Richard Sorge, Ernst Wollweber, Nikolai Kuznetsov. You can, of course, keep silent about the tragic and talk only about the heroic, as the communist newspapers did in their time, or, on the contrary, stick out only the dark and cruel,

without even saying a word about the feat of the Chekists, as the so-called democratic press is doing today. However, it seems to me that both are flawed. For one without the other is a lie. So let the high and the low, the honest and the vile, the heroic and the cowardly go hand in hand. So it was .. And we have no right to deviate from the truth.

But back to Yakov Serebryansky. His broken, twisted life and tragic death are worth telling about them in more detail.

After so many years of successful work, in November 1938 Serebryansky was arrested and sentenced to death. He was brutally tortured. 191

The main foreign centers of Soviet intelligence were destroyed, the best intelligence officers and heads of residencies were arrested and thrown into the dungeons of Beria. Almost destroyed the entire Special Group. However, Serebryansky himself

was not shot. In 1941, with the outbreak of war, the country's leadership felt the need to strengthen the intelligence and sabotage service.

On July 5, a special unit is formed in the NKVD - a special group under the people's commissar of internal affairs. But where do you get footage? And then the head of the newly created group, Pavel Sudoplatov, goes to Beria. Here is how he

writes about this in his memoirs: "At the beginning of the war, we experienced an acute shortage of qualified personnel. Eitingon and I suggested that former intelligence and state security officers be released from prisons. Beria's cynicism and simplicity in the decisions of human destinies were clearly manifested in his reaction to our proposal. Beria was not at all interested in whether those whom we recommended for work were guilty or not guilty. He asked one single question: "Are you sure we need them?" "I'm quite sure," I replied. "Then contact Kobulov, let him release him." AND

use them immediately.

I got to view the case of the people I requested. From

they followed that everyone was arrested on the initiative and direct order of the top leadership - Stalin and Molotov. Unfortunately, Spiegelglas, Karin, Mali and other scouts had already been shot by this time. So, among others, Yakov Serebryansky was at large. He, as well as

Maklyarsky, Gudimovich, Orlov, Lebedev and others, headed the departments within the Special Group. Yakov Serebryansky worked the entire war for the benefit of Soviet intelligence, and in 1946 he

had to leave. Abakumov was appointed Minister of State Security. The same Abakumov, who led the case of the "enemy of the people" Serebryansky in 1938 and brutally tortured the arrested person, beating him out of false

indications.

It was bitter to leave, but Colonel Serebryansky then did not
I could imagine what a lucky break this was. After death

¹⁹²

Stalin, he will be returned to the service again, appointed deputy head of the intelligence and sabotage service. But just a few months after the execution, Beria was again arrested along with his wife, now as Beria's accomplice. Colonel Yakov Serebryansky, the creator of the intelligence and sabotage service of our country, died

during interrogation in 1956, never leaving prison. He would be posthumously rehabilitated in 1971.

The history of both reconnaissance and sabotage centers in the 20s and 30s is full of a large number of complex operations carried out abroad. Among the most famous are the abduction of the

White Guard generals Kutepov and Miller, the murder of the head of the OUN, the protege of Hitler and Canares, Colonel Konovalts, the massacre of Trotsky, the delivery of Spanish gold to Moscow.

Cruelly and mercilessly, Stalin cracked down on traitors and defectors. This terrible work had to be done by agents of the INO and the Special Group.

In 1937, the illegal intelligence agent Reiss was sentenced to death in absentia by a Soviet court. He did not return to his homeland for a very prosaic reason: he squandered the money allocated for illegal work, and, fearing reprisals, remained in the West. Reiss wrote a letter to the Soviet embassy in France in

which he opposed Stalin. This letter appeared later in one of the Trotskyist publications.

INO agents tracked down Reiss in Paris and brought a mortal sentence to be carried out.

The same thing happened to the defector Agabekov, once our resident in Turkey. He is mired in smuggling and fraud. It was liquidated in Paris.

The author of the book "I was Stalin's agent", military intelligence officer Krivitsky, who fled in 1937, was found dead four years later in a hotel in Washington. There is reason to believe that he became a victim of persecution by NKVD agents.

Of all the traitors to the death penalty, perhaps only two managed to escape - Stalin's secretary Boris Bazhanov and holder of the Order of Lenin, Major of State Security Alexander Orlov. Both of them, no doubt, were talented people. So,

Bazhanov at the age of 20 became the secretary of the county party committee, and

¹⁹³
at 23 - Stalin's assistant and secretary. At the same time, he was approved by the Secretary of the Politburo. Bazhanov is

smart and independent, and if he were not in such a high position, next to Stalin, he would not be able to take his head off. Yagoda even wrote a letter to Stalin stating that the secretary of the Politburo was a latent counter-revolutionary. True, the GPU could not provide any evidence, but Yagoda referred to his intuition and

experience.

By the way, Stalin showed the letter to Bazhanov. Apparently, he liked this turn of affairs, in which the secretary of the Politburo and the head of the GPU were at enmity.

On the night of January 1, 1928, Boris Bazhanov, together with an employee of the GPU Arkady Maximov, fled the country, crossing the Soviet-Persian border in the south of Turkmenistan. In his book "Memoirs of the former secretary of Stalin. The Kremlin, 20s", which Bazhanov released abroad, he says: "In the evening of December 31, Maximov and I go hunting. Maximov, in fact, would prefer to stay

and celebrate the New Year in some kind of cheerful company, but he is afraid that his superiors (GPU) will be very displeased that he does not follow me on my heels. We arrive by rail at the Lutfabad station and immediately appear at the head of the border outpost. I show documents, a pass for the right to hunt in the border zone.

The head of the outpost invites me to take part in a friendly meeting of the New Year. This is a courtesy invitation. I answer that, firstly, I came to hunt, I prefer to get enough sleep and go hunting fresh in the early morning; secondly, they, of course, want to drink in a friendly circle, but I don't drink anything and I don't fit at all for drinking companies. We go to sleep.

The next day, January 1, early in the morning we leave and go straight to the Persian village. After one kilometer in an open field and right in front of the frontier post, I see a dilapidated post: this is a frontier post, further - Persia. The border outpost shows no signs of life - it is all dead drunk. My Maximov does not understand the topography of places at all and does not suspect that we have one foot in Persia. We sit down and have breakfast. After breakfast, I get up: we have a carbine each, but there are still all the cartridges

I have. I say: "Arkady Romanovich, this is a border guard

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pillar and this is Persia. You are as you wish. And I - to Persia and forever leave the socialist paradise - even if the Soviet

the building of communism continues without me."

Maximov is lost: "I can't go back - they'll shoot me for letting you go." I suggest: "If you want, I will take you and take you to Europe; but I warn you that from now on you will be the same hunt as me. Maximov believes that he has no other choice - he is with me to Persia.

We come to the village and try to find the local authorities.

Finally, we succeed..."

Thus begins the long, dangerous journey of Stalin's secretary to Europe. Already on January 2, the outpost was notified,

but there was no chase, the border guards were drunk. Meanwhile, the fugitives arrive in the center of the district, from there the path to the provincial capital - Meshed. But the highway to Meshed has already been blocked by the Chekists, and Bazhanov and Maksimov set off through the mountains. There is no road, all the paths are covered with snow. But this is the only salvation: the Chekists will not go to the mountains. On the fifth day of the journey, the fugitives descend into the valley of Meshed and

transfer to the bus. They are already being "led" by agents of the GPU.

The bus takes them to the hotel. Explain that Europeans live here, the natives stay in caravanserais.

In the evening Bazhanov and Maksimov are served coffee in the restaurant. He gives off a bitter smell of almonds - the smell of potassium cyanide.

The governor of Khorasan receives Bazhanov in the morning and puts them in the office of the chief of police. The local police station is located in a medieval fortress. So this is the safest place. All day long, a tribe of Kurdish riders is on duty at the gates of the fortress. They are hired by agents of the GPU and

are waiting for the fugitives. At the same time, negotiations in Tehran are dragging on, the USSR is ready to make any concessions in order to capture the defectors.

The resident of the GPU in Persia, Agabekov, arrives in Meshed and personally organizes the capture of traitors. Without waiting for the development of further events, which quite possibly could have ended tragically, Bazhanov negotiates with a Hindu merchant, and he delivers them across the border of Persia with India into the hands of the leader of the watchdog Baloch tribe.

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Soon, the defectors cross the Baloch desert on camels and surrender into the hands of the British Resident in India. They are greeted warmly enough.

In mid-August 1928, Bazhanov and Maximov boarded a steamer in Bombay and two weeks later entered the land of France. However, here, too, "Stalin's envoys" do not leave Bazhanov alone. They

"organize" a car accident, set the jealous husband of a certain French woman, supposedly Bazhanov's mistress.

Finally, Stalin sends the famous KGB assassin, INO employee Yakov Blyumkin, to Paris. He is recalled from Transcaucasia, where he suppressed the uprising of the Georgians, and sent as a resident of the GPU to France. Blumkin must destroy

Bazhanov. However, Blumkin returned to Moscow with nothing, however, he reported: the former Stalinist secretary was finished.

Indeed, the Chekists threw a man off the train on the move, but it turned out to be not Bazhanov. However, this "duck" took

root, especially since the INO did not want to admit its miscalculation. "1930," as Bazhanov himself writes,

"ends the most

dangerous lane for me...

Around 1930, great changes took place in the GPU. In particular, Messing took the place of the head of the Foreign Department Trilisser. In this regard, both the composition of the staff and the nature of the work of the GPU's residency abroad have changed dramatically.

Fate decreed that the Stalinist secretary survived all the persecutors - both Agabekov and Blumkin, who was shot in 1929, and Stalin himself. He died in Paris in 1982.

As for Orlov, he was quite a large and successful scout. The execution of the leader of the Spanish Trotskyists, the delivery of gold from the Spanish Republic to the Soviet Union is the work of Orlov.

He was well known by the deputy head of the Foreign Department Shpigelglas, he was a close friend of the head of the INO Slutsky, who, by the way, himself nominated Orlov for the post of our resident in Spain.

"In October 1937," Orlov would later write in his memories, - Schnigelglas arrived in Spain (writing

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copyright), Slutsky's deputy. It was none other than he, in three months, organized in Switzerland the murder of Ignatius Reiss, an NKVD resident who refused to return to Moscow. Shnigelglas, whose wife and daughter remained virtually as hostages in the Soviet Union, was not sure of his own fate and was probably thinking about how to get out of the game himself. But that doesn't make him any less dangerous.

He did not have any obvious business in Spain, and his arrival only strengthened my suspicions, especially when I learned that he met in Madrid with a certain Boldin, who, as it turned out, was sent to Spain by Yezhov as the head of a terrorist "mobile group".

I waited, postponing my break with Moscow... The naive hope that some changes were possible, that something would happen in Moscow that would put an end to the nightmare of endless terror still did not leave me. Finally, Moscow itself decided for me. On July 9, 1938, I

received a telegram from Yezhov, at that time the second person in the country after Stalin. I was ordered to go to Belgium, to Antwerp, and on July 14 to board the Soviet ship "Svir" standing there for a conference with a comrade,

"known to you personally."

It was clear that the Svir would become my floating prison. I telegraphed the answer: I will arrive in Antwerp on the appointed day. However, Orlov did not come to the meeting. From Spain to

with his wife and daughter he crossed the frontier of France. He arrived in Paris, from there he left Europe on the Canadian motor ship Montclair. Upon arrival in Canada, Orlov wrote a letter to Stalin and sent a

copy to Yezhov. In the message, he warned: in the event of surveillance and organization of an assassination attempt, he would make public the documents stored in a Swiss bank. Orlov asked to be left in

peace of his wife's mother.

In addition, Stalin and the leadership of the NKVD knew that the "fugitive" was well acquainted with our intelligence network in England, France, Germany, not to mention Spain itself. Orlov also threatened, if they did not fulfill his conditions, to give

publicized documents concerning Spanish gold.

Stalin, of course, did not want publicity for the "golden business". After all, our military support of the Republicans in the Civil War was presented to the world as purely disinterested.

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An order was issued to stop the search for Orlov. Pavel Sudoplatov writes about this episode in his memoirs Intelligence and the Kremlin. Orlov himself claims that "the hunt for me began immediately and lasted fourteen years." Although he does not give any facts of this "hunt".

This is how the problem of traitors and defectors was solved in the 1920s and 1930s. Today somehow the hand does not rise to throw a stone at those who fled abroad from the nightmare of Stalinist repressions. Indeed, in the bloody meat grinder of repressive companies, such well-known Chekists as M.

Latsis, J. Peters, G. Boki, S. Messing, A. Artuzov, V. Dombrovsky, L. Mironov, Y. Agranov, A. Pillar, G. Prokofiev, G. Blagonravov. According to some reports, the head of the INO A. Slutsky was poisoned. All these employees, for the most part, did not want

participate in the destruction of innocent people.

So, the oldest security officer A. Artuzov in 1937, speaking at the party activists of the NKVD, said: "With the sergeant-major style of leadership established after the death of Menzhinsky, individual security officers and even entire links of our organization embarked on the most dangerous path of turning into simple technicians of the apparatus of the internal department with all the shortcomings, putting us on the same level as the despicable secret police of the capitalists.

Shortly after this speech, Artuzov was arrested and shot. The People's Commissar of Internal Affairs of Belarus I. Leplevsky, the honorary Chekist F. Fomin, the organizer and creator of children's communes, the Chekist M. Pogrebinsky refused to use the "new methods" of the investigation. In 1937, the founder of the Soviet military intelligence Ya. Berzin was recalled from Spain and shot. However, the relevance of this problem

is that they fled even after Stalin, when the repressions were left far behind. True, they already referred to Khrushchev or Brezhnev's totalitarianism. Well, now there is neither one nor the other. I wonder what they'll say

future traitors at their press conferences? What were they running from? Let's leave alone

"Stalin's fugitives". Indeed, it was a terrible time. But the subsequent traitors, let's be objective, little threatened. In any case, despite

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their "tales" about the persecution of the KGB, none of them died a violent death. True, some media still stubbornly

repaint the terry traitors in the "pink" "Don Quixotes disinterestedly opposing", violently totalitarianism. The only tragedy is that the bright image of the "knights mercy of the enemy, turns And from the KGB", who surrendered to the out to be pretty

tarnished by their greed for money and other material values. If I am not mistaken, one of the leaders of the CIA admitted that he did not remember a single Soviet intelligence officer who remained abroad for purely patriotic reasons. Alas, the desire for profit is always at the heart of betrayal. In any case, at the heart of our betrayal. So that. There is another very solid fly in the ointment in the honey barrel of fighters for democracy in the spy field. A traitor scout, as you know, does not leave alone. After all, he needs to pay off something with the new owners. But what? First of all, the fate of their former

comrades, colleagues. Therefore, behind the defectors there is always a trail of failures and arrests.

After the departure of Oleg Lyalin from the London residency in September 1971, the Heath government ordered the expulsion of 90 Soviet diplomats. 15 people who were on leave at home received a notice of the prohibition of re-entry into England. In total, the number of deportees reached 105 people. Many of them were KGB and GRU officers. But the point is not only that for a sufficiently long period the work of the Soviet station in London was paralyzed. The main thing is that a major political scandal

broke out, people, our intelligence officers, suffered. According to the deputy head of the Intelligence and sabotage department, General Alexander Lazarenko, under whom Lyalin worked, the traitor handed over four agents. They were thrown into prison for ten years.

How to deal with traitors? All their former colleagues with whom I have met believe that no case of betrayal should go unpunished. Traitors must be tried in person or in absentia, and the verdict

be carried out wherever the defector is. However, the majority emphasized that everything should be in accordance with the law, in accordance with the decision of the court. I think this is impossible agree.

It should not be forgotten that in addition to traitors and defectors, there are criminals, terrorists, murderers,

who are hiding from fair retribution abroad. An example of this is the impunity of the killer of the talented Russian singer Igor Talkov. The one who brutally shot the singer is in Israel, but there is no one to "get" him from there. What kind of a great country are we after that? But the whole history of the INO and the Special Group shows how high was the efficiency of our special services. For them, nothing was impossible. In every corner of the world, they carried out the orders of the leadership of the Soviet Union. But many of the orders were criminal. But this is not the fault of scouts and saboteurs, but their misfortune. The trouble of that time, country, generation. And we must remember this too. That is why I included the next chapter in the story. Let

she
will not allow our memory to be "forgotten".

PUNISHING HAND

On August 21, 1940, Mexican President Lazaro Cardenas writes in his diary: "Today, Mr. Trotsky died as a result of an attack on him yesterday by Jacques Mornard, a Belgian by nationality, who visited his house as a friend. The attack was carried out with an ice pick during a private conversation in Trotsky's office, in Cayoacán. Mornard is a fanatic in the service of Trotsky's enemies, he came from abroad six months ago. He is 28 years old. Mr. Rivera applied for

Trotsky's residence permit in Mexico, since other countries refused Trotsky's asylum. The deeds and ideas of peoples do not disappear with the death of their leaders, on the contrary, they are affirmed even more by the blood of the victims of the holy cause. Trotsky's blood will become fertilizer in the hearts of

the people of his homeland." 200

President Cardenas was wrong. Trotsky's cause was not holy. As well as the case of his main enemy and murderer. Trotsky was

killed by Stalin. Today, hardly anyone can be convinced that Trotsky and his supporters could become a real threat to the Soviet Union even on the eve of the war. By 1940, of the leaders of the

revolution, only two survived - Stalin himself and the hated by him Leon Trotsky. "Koba" destroyed everyone. Only in faraway Mexico did his worst enemy still live, writing vile articles. And even swung to write a book about him. "Koba" imagined what kind of book it would be. Stalin tried to destroy Trotsky more than once. He knew almost every step he took. But the cunning Leiba slipped away. In 1937,

the elimination of Trotsky was entrusted to one of the most experienced employees of the intelligence and sabotage service, Shpigelglas. But Trotsky survived. In March 1939, when the Special Group had already been defeated

Serebryansky and imprisoned almost the entire Foreign Department, Stalin summoned Beria and Sudoplatov to the Kremlin. Perhaps, Sudoplatov remained one of the most experienced militants of the sabotage service, who managed to avoid arrest.

Almost a year ago, in Rotterdam, he presented the head of the OUN, Colonel Konovalov, with a box of his favorite chocolates. This box was made by the hands of skilled Chekists from the department of operational and technical means, where they installed an explosive device. The horseman died. Sudoplatov managed to escape, through

France and Spain he returned to his homeland. In Moscow, a solemn meeting awaited him. Sudoplatov was received by

Lavrenty Beria himself, recently appointed Yezhov's first deputy, head of the Main Directorate of State Security of the NKVD. He talked with the arriving agent for almost four hours. He was interested in all the details of the operation, which received the code name "Stavka". In a word, the management was delighted with the operation: Sudoplatov was given leave, they were promised a promotion.

However, fortunately, the appointment did not take place. Passov and Shpigelglas were arrested, Sudoplatov himself was accused of maintaining friendly relations with exposed enemies of the people. 201

The party bureau expelled him from the party. He came to work and waited for arrest. This continued until March 1939. And suddenly, one of the March days, Beria called him to him. Stalin was waiting for them in the Kremlin. The order to hold the

action was given by Stalin himself. Recalling that day, Sudoplatov wrote: "Then Stalin became stern and minted the words: "Trotsky must be eliminated within a year ..." In the same conversation, Stalin assured Sudoplatov: "You will be

provided with any support and assistance." Pavel Anatolyevich left the Stalinist office as deputy head of intelligence. The party meeting, which was supposed to approve the decision of the party bureau on his expulsion from the CPSU (b), did not take place. Preparations began for the operation to eliminate Trotsky. By this time, Eitingon had returned from France, and Sudoplatov involved him in the development of the operation. Eitingon played the main role. We decided that the only way to get close to Trotsky was through our agents, who settled in Mexico after the end of the Spanish Civil War.

The first impulse was to use the old "deep-injection agent" Maria da Las Heras. It was introduced into Trotsky's secretariat when he was in Norway. However, there was a real danger of failure. After all, Spiegelglas wanted to use "Patria" (Maria's code name) in 1937. And therefore, the traitor and defector Orlov knew her well. Who knows how he will behave, despite the promise to remain silent?

After analyzing the situation, we decided not only not to

use "Patria", but urgently recall her from Mexico.

The next step is the desire to involve agents of the Trotskyists, such as, for example, the Ruan brothers. However, this idea was also abandoned.

They took as a basis agents who had never been used in any operations against Trotsky. There were two groups of them. One led by the leader of the Mexican Communist Party, a veteran of the war in Spain, David Siqueiros, the other was headed by Caridad Mercader. In recent years, thanks to publications in the

Russian press, the name Mercader has become known in our country. But they know more about Ramon Mercader, the murderer of Trotsky.

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Less well known is the entire Mercader family. Although a few words should be said about it. Without this family, perhaps there would be no Ramon. This is the case when

the mother Caridad Mercader attracted the middle son to the sabotage work. The eldest of Caridad's sons died in the Spanish Civil War. He threw himself under a tank with grenades.

In 1938, mother and son moved from Barcelona to Paris. Ramon here played the role of a kind of young rake, a successful businessman who generously helped friends, but was a person far from politics.

At that time, he bore the name of Jacques Mornard, later, allegedly wanting to avoid being drafted into military service in Belgium, he changed his passport and became Frank Jackson. In any case, this is how he explained his "rename" to his bride, Sylvia Ageloff. And she, deeply in love with him, believed. However, this is not the point. Sylvia was close to

Trotsky, being an active member of his North American section, preparing the founding conference of the GU International in Paris. It was during these days that she was introduced to the young handsome Jacques Mornard. It turns out that he studied journalism at the Sorbonne, to the surprise of his fiancée, he was not at all interested in politics. Once she tried to invite him to the house of her friends Alfredo and Marguerite Rozmerov, where the conference was to be held, but Frank graciously refused.

At the same time, he came up with various entertainment events for her: walks, friendly feasts. Money flowed like a river. He declared his love, talked about

the upcoming marriage.

Sylvia again tried to involve him in politics, but he did not want to think about it. Frank was only interested in commerce.

In January 1940, Ageloff returned to Mexico City after a trip to New York and soon began working for Trotsky. Frank now drove her every day in his car to Trotsky's house, but he never tried to get inside. In the meantime, he met with the guards of the house. They liked Sylvia's handsome,

outgoing fiancé. It was a pleasure to chat with him. Frank turned out to be a generous fellow -

offered cigarettes and chocolate.

He soon became acquainted with the Rosmers. It came out like by itself. Sylvia left Trotsky's house with Al

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Fredo and Marguerite. And Frank offered to give them a lift. On the way they began to talk, and now the Rosmers were invited to friendly feasts along with Sylvia. At the end of March,

Trotsky, who had already heard about Sylvia's fiancé, invited him to the house for the first time. So the first difficult

barrier was overcome at a distance, the end of which was to be the assassination of Trotsky.

And it all began in the summer of 1939, when Sudoplatov and Eitingon departed for Paris on false documents. Here they met with the group of Siqueiros and Ramon and Caridad Mercaders. Both groups acted autonomously and did not know each other.

They already had experience in sabotage work, and the basics undercover work undertook to train them Eitingon.

A month later, Sudoplatov returned to Moscow. Here he received word that Caridad and Ramon had departed for New York. According to the plan of the operation, Eitingon was supposed to follow them, but unexpected difficulties arose.

The Nazis occupied France, and fake Polish documents became very dangerous - Eitingon could be interned or drafted into the army at any time. Our resident in Paris hid Eitingon in a psychiatric hospital,

where an NKVD agent worked as the head physician. In the meantime, new false documents were obtained for him. Now he was a Jew who had come from Syria and had a residence permit in France. The head physician diagnosed Eitingon with a mental disorder, which exempted him from military service. Soon Eitingon also ended up in America, where he founded

commercial firm. She served as a "roof" for Mercader.

Meanwhile, Frank courted Sylvia, still standing independently and proudly.

In turn, the Siqueiros group, which had a detailed plan Trotsky's villa on the outskirts of Mexico City, was preparing for an assault.

At the end of 1939, Beria, who personally supervised the preparations for the operation, brought an experienced illegal intelligence agent Grigulevich into the game. He arrived in Mexico to create a third, reserve network of militants. Grigulevich managed to get

along with Trotsky's bodyguard - Robert Sheldon Hart.

It was Hart who opened the gates to Grigulevich in the early morning of May 23, 1940.

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This is how the scene of the attack is described by Yuri Paporov, who worked in the 1950s as the cultural attaché of the Soviet embassy in Mexico City and who collected interesting materials about the assassination attempt on Trotsky. "It was night... the

rain was falling like a waterfall. closer to At four o'clock in the morning it was completely clear.

She walked with her hips swaying. Hot hugs and kisses were heard and seen by those whose hands immediately tore him from the woman's body, clamped his mouth, intercepted his elbows with a rope, and led them behind his

back. The rest of the policemen, who were in a booth at the corner of Vena and Morelos streets, from where the external protection of the high-walled house opposite, saw the people commanded by the infantry lieutenant and heard the order: "Hands up, bitch children!", did not have time to resist, quickly were disarmed, tied up and left under the guard of two armed men in civilian clothes.

Military and policemen - a group of about twenty people under the command of an infantry major, he pressed the call button. Almost immediately, a voice was heard outside the gate: "Who is there?" one of the visitors answered, and the door in the gate opened. They knew the location of the house down to the smallest detail, although none of them had ever been in it before, everyone knew what he had to do. The bedroom... There, on a wide bed, covered with light

blankets, lay two people awakened by shots. Appearing at the open window outside and in the doors leading to the bedroom and nursery, strangers began to shoot at those hiding under the blankets with automatic weapons. Many bullets were fired. This stream of lead rain did not arouse the slightest doubt among the newcomers - those who, before their arrival, slept the sleep of the righteous, are now sleeping with eternal sleep.

It was possible and necessary to leave, and the major - stout, able to wear a uniform and command in a firm voice in which jubilation overflowed - gave a short order.

The shooting stopped. The attackers hurried to leave the yard. The gates swung open, and two cars, an old Ford and a new Dodge, parked inside the yard and now crammed with attackers, along with the guard who let them into the house, rushed away, splashing the sidewalks with spray and liquid mud.

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At the wheel of the Dodge was Robert Sheldon Hart, the guard of the house in which L.D. Trotsky lived in the summer of 1940, one of the leaders of the October Revolution, Chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council of the RSFSR, organizer of the Red Army, Lenin's closest ally.

However, Trotsky and his wife Natalya Sedova managed to hide behind a bed in the far corner of the bedroom. And this time Stalin's enemy survived.

On the fact of the attack on Trotsky's apartment, Siqueiros was arrested. Grigulevich managed to escape, Hart was found dead.

Eitingon's agents sent a message to Moscow about the failure of the operation. As you know, for a number of reasons it arrived late, and Stalin learned about the failure from a TASS report.

It is unlikely that we will ever know how the "leader of the peoples" actually reacted to this. The head of the operation,

Sudoplatov, would write many years later that Stalin "was not at all furious." On the contrary, he looked

calmly.

Now hope was pinned on Ramon, aka Jacques, aka Frank. Eitingon and Mercader, having begun direct preparations for the assassination attempt, were looking, first of all, for a convincing motive for the murder. They came up with a kind of conglomerate of personal and public reasons.

On the one hand, Mercader kills Trotsky for allegedly dissuading Sylvia Ageloff from marrying him. On the other hand, if the killer is caught, he must also confess that the Trotskyists dragged him into some terrorist group. I must say that the legend was weak, poorly thought out. In the first moments of fright, Mercader will shout that a certain Perez ordered him to kill Trotsky. He met him in Paris. Then, in an ambulance, he will

hand over a letter in which he will write that he was disappointed in Trotsky. But, according to the secret police, he was in total contact with Trotsky for only four hours. What kind of disappointment can be discussed, they were hardly familiar.

Mercader claimed that Trotsky suggested that he go to Russia to organize several terrorist attacks there and kill the leaders of the party, led by Stalin. This statement was also very naive - an experienced

Trotsky entrusts such a task to an unfamiliar person? Yes
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and when did he do it? The last time they met, they talked for about a quarter of an hour. Apparently, neither

Eitingon nor Caridad expected such an outcome. They believed that the Buick car that was waiting for him near the house would help Mercader escape. But it happened differently. However, first things first. Having developed some kind of legend, Eitingon and his group undertook

for the immediate preparation of the operation.

The original plan was as follows: Eitingon, Caridad, at the head of a group of militants, break into the villa, start a shootout with the guards, and at this time Ramon kills Trotsky. This plan was rejected by Mercader. He undertook to do everything himself. But Trotsky was not

killed immediately. After being hit with an ice ax, he screamed, Mercader was confused, he did not have time to pull out the knife. He was knocked off his feet.

When a commotion arose in the house, Eitingon and Caridad fled the scene. They were waiting for Ramon outside, in car.

They had to urgently leave for Cuba, and Grigulevich fled to the United States.

Everything that happened next with the murderer of Trotsky, even today, after many publications, not fully disclosed and known.

Mercader served twenty years in prison. For the first six years, the Mexican authorities never learned the true name of Ramon. When he was captured, he was documented as Frank Jackson, a Canadian businessman. Mercader himself firmly adhered to

previously agreed version: he killed Trotsky out of personal malice.

Mercader spent a long hunger strike, he was artificially fed. The investigation dragged on. How did you find out the true name of Jackson? There are two versions of this. The first was the head of the operation, Pavel Sudoplatov.

He believes that Caridad Mercader herself is to blame for the disclosure of the secret of the name of the murderer of Trotsky. With the outbreak of the war, she was evacuated to Tashkent and there one day she told her friend, one of the leaders of the Spanish Communist Party, about Ramon. After the war, he fled to the West and there betrayed the secret. The Mercader case was brought to Mexico from

the archives of the Spanish police. His identity has been established. He admitted,

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who comes from a wealthy Spanish family, but still insisted on the personal nature of the murder. Ramon never said a word that he was a Soviet agent. The Mexican artist Diego Rivera told the same Yuri

Paporov quite differently: "Dr. Quiros Cuaron conducted a study before the court, whether the killer was insane. Mercader,

that is, Mornar, so interested the doctor that many years later, on his own initiative, he went to Spain. There, the doctor found in the archives of the Madrid Police Department photographs of Ramon Mercader del Rio in profile and full face. Ramon was arrested and imprisoned as a communist and served until the victory of the Popular Front. The police also provided the doctor with an imprint of the index finger of his right hand. The photo and the fingerprint left no one in doubt."

There is another interesting detail in this story. In the main prison of the country - Lecumberi Ramon Mercader enjoyed special indulgences. He sat in a "luxury" cell with a double bed, his own library, radio, and a special kitchen. Twice a week he was visited by a woman who later became the prisoner's wife. In those years, a TV set installed in the cell was a curiosity. Who paid for all this "prison luxury"? Maybe the "grateful" NKVD did not forget its agent? Or maybe a

wealthy family helped? Who knows? Nevertheless, Mercader served his term in prison, as they say, from "ring to bell". He was released from prison in 1960. These two decades are a whole era in the life of the country. Stalin died, Beria was shot, Khrushchev was in power. The political climate has changed.

The attitude towards him, the murderer of Trotsky, also changed. After Mercader's arrival in Moscow, the Gold Star of the Hero was personally presented to him by the KGB chief Shelepin. But soon the newly appointed chairman of the State Security Committee Semichastny

refused to meet his former agent.

By Soviet standards, Ramon lived well: he received a general's pension, had a state dacha, and a quiet job at the Institute of Marxism-Leninism. Those who knew him say that Mercader did not repent

in what he did. Yes, he understood: another time had come.

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From the heights of the "Khrushchev thaw" much was seen in a different light. But he did not kill in the 60s, but in 1940. What can you do, we all live in the real world, and no one can see into the future. If we talk about today's

argumentation of those who prepared and carried out the assassination of Trotsky, then, perhaps, you cannot say more precisely than General Pavel Sudoplatov. Because fate gave him a unique opportunity to survive several eras - Stalin's totalitarianism, Khrushchev's thaw, Brezhnev's stagnation, Gorbachev's perestroika, and even the current time of troubles, which has not yet received a vivid figurative name. "It's completely clear to me,"

Sudoplatov writes in his memoirs, "that today's moral

principles are incompatible with the cruelty that is characteristic of the period of the struggle for power that follows the revolutionary upheaval and the civil war. Stalin and Trotsky opposed each other, resorting to criminal methods to achieve their goals, but the difference is that in exile Trotsky opposed not only Stalin, but also the Soviet Union as such.

This confrontation was a war of annihilation." Yes, Stalin destroyed Trotsky. As, however, and all the other leaders of the October Revolution. Trotsky was the last in this galaxy. Of course, not counting Stalin himself. Ramon Mercader, who, by the will of fate, was "Stalin's punishing right hand", died in Cuba in 1978. His body was secretly transported to Moscow and buried at the Kuntsevo cemetery.

On the tombstone there is an inscription: Ramon Ivanovich Lopez, Hero of the Soviet Union.

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PART THREE GRAPH NELIDOV'S PREDICTION

One of the most bitter and tragic pages of our history is the eve of the Great Patriotic War. Today we are no longer so naive as to unanimously demand an exact answer to the question: where was intelligence? Many documents have been

declassified, secret levers of negotiations, conspiracies, pacts have been revealed, but even now there is not enough clarity - how did all this happen? Why did Hitler's aggression become "treacherous and unexpected" for us, and why did we have to pay an immeasurably high price for victory?

Pre-war miscalculations paid for by millions of lives. What is the role of intelligence here, and how big is its share in the national tragedy?

It is difficult to single out the role of intelligence itself from the general context of the political situation of that time. For the pre-war state of Europe is characterized by extreme instability, a clash of geopolitical interests

various countries, fascist aggression.

However, despite this, it was possible to get out of the difficult situation with much smaller losses. Then why didn't they come out? Alas, we still lack the courage to admit that Stalin's pre-war policy was a chain of mistakes and miscalculations that led to dire consequences and brought the country to the brink of disaster.

Today it is known for certain: Molotov's visit to Berlin and Hitler's secret proposal to divide the world between Germany, Japan and the Soviet Union created a stable stereotype in Stalin, he decided that it was possible to negotiate with Hitler. Why not, Germany and the USSR are two powerful world powers.

Stalin's conviction was also based on the fact that fascist Germany would not start a war with the Soviet Union until victory over England.

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And here it is necessary to say about the largest miscalculation of our intelligence. Hitler relied on blitzkrieg, which meant that the Germans were planning their attack on the Soviet Union even before the end of the war with England.

The most annoying thing in this situation is that the blitzkrieg data The NKVD had, but, as often happens, the analysts failed.

In 1939, when the Red Army occupied Western Ukraine, a major spy, a double agent of the Abwehr and British intelligence, a former White Guard officer, Count Nelidov, was found in a Lvov prison. No doubt it was a great success. The best employees

of Soviet intelligence worked with Nelidov: the head of the German direction Zhuravlev, the experienced Zarubin, who was the creator of our intelligence network in Germany.

Nelidov knew a lot. At one time he participated in the strategic "games" of the German General Staff. In addition, while in a prison cell, he was not exposed to Stalinist ideology, did not know many of the nuances of the pre-war situation in the country.

In a word, he was free from the prevailing stereotypes of those years in which our scouts were captured. In any case,

everything that Count Nelidov told about the tasks that the Abwehr set for their sabotage services spoke of one thing: the Nazis decided on a blitzkrieg.

Alas, neither Sudoplatov, nor Zhuravlev, nor Zarubin paid any attention to it's attention.

The materials obtained by the agents of the deputy head of the Foreign Department Spiegelglas, who had already been executed by that time, were also forgotten.

The documents just concerned the military-strategic "games" of the Germans.

The testimony of Nelidov and intelligence materials Shpigelglas remembered only in 1941, in the first, especially difficult months of the war.

Reported to Stalin. To interrogate Count Nelidov and get acquainted with the documentation, the head of the Operational Directorate of the Red Army, the future Map

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shawl of the Soviet Union Vasilevsky and the head of the intelligence department

Golikov. It became clear to everyone that the

Germans were betting on a blitzkrieg. The insight came late. The Nazis had already captured vast territories of the country and were rapidly moving towards Moscow. This was undoubtedly a grave intelligence miscalculation. However, in fairness, it should be said that this was a miscalculation in a number of other numerous miscalculations.

Hitler outwitted Stalin with his promises to divide the world. However, not everything is so clear-cut here. Indeed, in the leadership of fascist Germany, before the final decision was made, there was no unity in views on the war with the USSR.

Suffice it to cite as an example a letter from the German ambassador to the Soviet Union, Schulenburg, to his boss in Berlin, Ribbentrop, intercepted by our intelligence. The ambassador offered his services in mediating activities for the settlement of Soviet-German relations. And at the same time, in the same message, Schulenburg reported: the instructions to reduce the embassy staff have been fulfilled and German diplomats are urgently leaving Moscow. Even from one diplomatic document one can judge that complex, confusing, contradictory political situation.

The reports of agents, both military and political intelligence, were also contradictory. They reported that the strike of the Nazis was scheduled for the spring. But

spring passed, and Germany did not start. On Stalin's desk lay messages about the beginning of the war on June 1st and June 15th.

This could not but irritate Stalin, especially since his strategic views in no way coincided with the reports of agents.

The leaders of intelligence also felt the irritation of the leader. They remembered the tragic fate of their predecessors and did not want to repeat them.

The fear of a German armed attack, the desire to get away from the conflict, the state of political time pressure forced Stalin to make mistakes.

Now only specialists remember this fact of pre-war history. But he played a significant role in complicating our relations with Hitler. We are talking about the overthrow of the Yugoslav leadership, which signed a cooperation agreement with Germany.

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Both the NKVD and our military intelligence had a hand in the conspiracy. As a result, a pro-Soviet government appeared in Belgrade, with which we immediately signed an agreement on mutual assistance. Thus, Stalin wanted to strengthen himself on

Balkans.

Hitler, of course, learned about the machinations of the Kremlin. His reaction was very fast. Before the ink had dried on the Soviet Yugoslav treaty, he moved his divisions, and two weeks later the Yugoslav troops capitulated. In addition to this, Bulgaria, through which the German

army, supported Hitler.

The German leadership gave a clear answer that it did not care about the secret protocols of Molotov-Ribbentrop, in which it was written in black and white about the obligations of the parties to hold preliminary consultations on the eve of any hostilities. Stalin did not expect such an easy and quick defeat of Yugoslavia, but even these events did

not sober up the "leader of the peoples." He believed in his luck.

Hitler gave Stalin his last warning in May 1941. The German Junkers aircraft, having violated our air borders, flew over Soviet territory unnoticed and landed in Moscow at one of the airfields. So Rust was far from original. In response to the flight of the "Junkers" - a wave of arrests, executions, but nothing more. Hitler once again saw how weak the Red Army was. And we still lived by Voroshilov's theory that "we will beat the enemy with little blood and on foreign territory." "June 16 ... Beria summoned me to his place," writes Sudoplatov, by that time

the deputy head of our intelligence, in his memoirs, "he gave the order to organize a special group from among the intelligence officers directly subordinate to him ...

At the moment, our first task was to create a strike force from among experienced saboteurs capable of resisting any attempt to use provocative incidents on the border as a pretext for starting a war. Beria emphasized that our task is to prevent German provocateurs from carrying out actions similar to the one organized against Poland in 1939, when they seized the radio station in Gleiwitz in Germany. Not

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German provocateurs went on the air with anti-German statements, and then shot their own criminals, dressed in Polish uniforms ... "

Needless to say, clear evidence. There was only a week left before the war, and Beria was taking care of creating a special group to counter provocations. This time the Germans were not looking for provocations. They just dealt a powerful blow for which we were not prepared. Where was intelligence at that moment? In the same place as the

whole country.

After recovering from the shock, "I got up for a mortal battle."

The Great Patriotic War became great for intelligence and sabotage service of our country.

HITLER IS NEEDED ALIVE

Our intelligence, and in particular the sabotage service, entered the war extremely weakened after Stalin's repressions. Fortunately, some valuable agents, their well-established connections, managed to survive. This applied primarily to Germany.

The Schulze-Boysen group "settled" at the headquarters of the Wehrmacht Air Force, agent Harnack acted in the Ministry of Economics, agent Lehman acted in the Gestapo (the only one who managed to recruit the NKVD in this service). In 1940, the well-

known actress Olga Chekhova and Prince Janusz Radziwill turned out to be in the intelligence asset. Some agent positions were also

preserved in Poland, in Italy, and in Scandinavia. Two years before the start of the war, communication with

the agent "Friend" was restored. Once this man was a major figure in Germany. He was the right hand of Rem, the chief of the fascist stormtroopers. After the execution of Rem, he was thrown into prison, but over time he was released and even offered the

position of consul general. True, away from Germany - in Shanghai. Foreign intelligence officers in the Far East worked with Drug. The situation with reconnaissance and sabotage personnel inside the country was not the best. Already the first weeks, months of the war showed: you will have to fight on your own

territory

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rii, a lot of blood. This means that there is an urgent need for specialists in guerrilla warfare. Alas, by that time the network of

sabotage schools had been destroyed, the best partisan cadres "rotted" in Beria's cellars. And among them are the future Heroes of the Soviet Union - Medvedev, Vaupshasov, Karasev.

However, the front-line situation, the rapid advance of the Germans into the interior of the country forced them to take urgent measures. Already two weeks after the start of the war, a special unit was created in the NKVD - the Special Group under the People's Commissar of Internal Affairs. The group was entrusted with the task of organizing partisan operations, creating an effective agent network in the territories occupied by the enemy and, of course, carrying out acts of sabotage in the rear of the Nazis.

Immediately after the creation of the Special Group, a combat formation was deployed. At first, it bore the name of the troops of the Special Group, then it was renamed the Separate Motorized Rifle Brigade for Special Purposes (OMSBON NKVD of the USSR). The brigade was formed from athletes, as well as foreign

volunteers, internationalists. Suffice it to say that OMSBON was the last reserve of the country's leadership in case the Germans broke through to Moscow. In 1941, the fighters of this formation took up defense in the center of the capital, on the outskirts of the Kremlin. But more on this in a separate chapter of our

Meanwhile, the war was rolling east, and it soon became clear that the small Special Group was unable to cope with the growing volume of tasks.

In October 1941, the group deployed to the department, which is still closed to Beria.

And in 1942, the department was reorganized into the 4th

Directorate. I must say that the war forced Stalin to take a slightly different look at intelligence and sabotage service. Almost all the country's intelligence agencies underwent reorganization and strengthening - the intelligence department of the General Staff of the Red Army (now there were two departments), the NKVD intelligence (1st and 4th departments), and in 1943 SMERSH (military counterintelligence) created its own sabotage department. A similar body operated at the Central Headquarters of the partisan movement.

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What has been done by our reconnaissance and sabotage service during the war years? To tell at least

about the most famous, high-profile cases of specialists in this service would mean writing a multi-volume history. However, what is known today (according to veteran saboteurs) is only the tip of the iceberg.

And yet, a few words about the main, most striking, heroic ... First of all, about the preparation

of the assassination attempt on Hitler. Today it is no longer a secret that with the outbreak of the war, both the Soviet and German special services were preparing the "assassination of the century."

... September 1944. Near the village of Karmanovo, in the Smolensk region, on a rainy night, senior police lieutenant Vetrov stops a motorcycle on which two people ride - a major with a star of the Hero of the Soviet Union and a woman, a junior lieutenant. All documents are perfect. Moreover, Major P. Tavrín from SMERSH.

During the war, it is not customary for Smershev officers of this rank to ask questions. And yet, Vetrov asked: "Are you coming from the Baltic States?" This caused the major's extreme displeasure, but the policeman asked for a reason. The appearance of the major

and his companion seemed suspicious to him. They were too... dry. It rained all night, the soldiers were on the road, and yet they did not get wet at all.

The senior lieutenant decided to check this couple also because a message came in: a German plane was fired over the front line. Who knows if it's a landing party?

And the policeman, putting his hand to the visor, politely asked the major to call in the village, referring to the fact that it was necessary to make an official mark on the documents.

We stopped by. In the regional department, the major showed a telegram from Moscow. It really did say that Tavrín had been called to the centre. While checking

the documents, we managed to contact Moscow. There was no major with such a surname in the SMERSH of the 39th Army. So in the hands of the Soviet counterintelligence

was

a fascist agent, who was long and carefully prepared in Berlin by the German secret services. The legend of Tavrín was thought out to the smallest detail.

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Not only the major-smershevets entered Moscow, which in itself is quite significant, but also the Hero, holder of the orders of the Red Banner and the Red Star.

In his pocket, the major kept a newspaper that was worn out on the folds. "Pravda", in which there was an essay on the heroism of Tavrín.

All this: both orders, and documents for them, and a newspaper number - prepared by German intelligence.

The major also had front-line wounds. In case of verification, the Nazis performed an operation on Tavrín: deep incisions, stitches were supposed to confirm the truth of the wounds. The "ammunition" of the

major and his companion surprised even the worldly-wise counterintelligence officers. In addition to seven pistols and grenades, Tavrín was equipped with the latest top-secret faustpatron, which was developed on special order. The Germans called it "pankerknake". The weapon fired armor-piercing incendiary projectiles that penetrated 4.5 mm armor. A portable faustpatron camouflaged in a coat sleeve. Pankerknake was planned to be used at the moment

the passage of the Stalinist motorcade of cars through the streets of Moscow.

The Nazis also thought of a fallback option. Tavrín enters the ceremonial meeting at the Bolshoi Theater and lays a powerful mine. As a result of the explosion, the leadership of the USSR perishes,

military leaders.

Otto Skorzeny himself, Hitler's favorite, worked with Tavrín, terrorist number one in Germany.

He taught the agent to act boldly, decisively, without hesitation. He said that momentary confusion, cowardice can ruin everything. Pyotr Tavrín (real name Shilo) tried to act like

that, but he was not lucky. At the very first police post, he met with the vigilant Vetrov and ended up in the basements of the Lubyanka. And in Berlin, the owners of Tavrín will from time to time receive radio messages that he is being introduced into the environment

of the doctors of the Kremlin hospital, then into the "servants" of the Bolshoi Theater.

But German intelligence will not wait for the "assassination of the century".

The Soviet sabotage service went a different way. She did not prepare the "hellish grenade launcher" mounted in the sleeve of the militant's clothing. Our saboteurs were looking for approaches to Hitler through their agents. Figure number one in this deadly

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the famous Soviet boxer, champion of the country Igor Miklashevsky became the game. In 1941, he

allegedly fled to Germany, to his uncle. An ardent enemy of the Soviet Union, one of the leaders of the German anti-Bolshevik committee, Uncle Miklashevsky warmly received the nephew and gave him every support.

Miklashevsky himself did not blunder. He soon became popular in

Berlin, especially after the well-known meeting in the ring with the German champion Max Schmeling. Moreover, Igor managed to win this difficult duel. Thanks to his friendship with Schmeling,

Miklashevsky soon became his own man in the high society of the capital. He visited social events, high receptions. All this brought our agent closer to the cherished goal - the assassination attempt on Hitler. The actress Olga Chekhova, who worked on the instructions of the

NKVD in Berlin, had the same task. The details of this undoubtedly historical operation of the Soviet sabotage service are still not clear. However, it is known that Igor Miklashevsky sent a message to the Center: he was ready to assassinate Goering. But Stalin did not need the life of Hitler's henchman. Miklashevsky did not wait for the command to eliminate the chief of the German
air fleet.

Moreover, already in 1943, Stalin abandoned the idea of an assassination attempt on Hitler. Now that the Red Army was advancing, the Fuhrer was needed alive, not dead.

The elimination of Hitler could play into the hands of those circles that were trying to conclude a separate peace with our then allies - the USA and Great Britain. Such an agreement was extremely unfavorable to Stalin. Indeed, in this case, the Soviet Union found itself outside the European alliance of winners and lost its influence in Europe.

Stalin gives the order to stop the development of the operation to assassinate Hitler. The Soviet leader is now more concerned about, at first glance, a minor figure in the German political elite - the ambassador in Ankara von Papen. According to our intelligence, the

German diplomat von Papen is actively working to conclude a separate agreement. 218

He meets with the representative of the Vatican in Ankara. Stalin becomes aware of the essence of the negotiations. The representative of the Pope is pushing the German ambassador to sign a separate peace. From Moscow comes

the command: von Papen - to destroy. During the operation, the German ambassador was only wounded, not killed. It nevertheless gave a positive result. Papen is frightened, he cuts off his contacts. A special place in the history of Our intelligence belongs to the

group of Richard Sorge. It is hardly worth talking in detail about "Ramsay" and his work. Books have been written about him. I just want to give a few facts. Stalin, as you know, for some reason considered Sorge a double agent. The memoirs

of Marshal of the Soviet Union G. Zhukov can serve as confirmation. When before the war Zhukov was at a report to Stalin, he said: "One person gives us very important information about the plans of the Nazi government, but we have some doubts about this.

We do not trust him, because, according to our data, this is a double. Zhukov concluded:

"He probably meant Richard Sorge, whom I learned about after the war. He was actually accused of working both for us and for Hitler ... "They say that one day Stalin exclaimed:" There was one of ours who in Japan

acquired brothels and even reports the date of the German attack - June 22. Will you tell him to believe?" And he didn't believe. However, the war has begun. Sorge was right. The material he transmitted after June 22 was truly invaluable. Here is

just one example. On July 2, Emperor Hirohito held a meeting of the Throne Council. The council's decisions were top secret. But after a few days, Sorge finds out about them and sends them to

Moscow: Japan will remain neutral in relation to the USSR, attack Indochina. At the end of September, Sorge again confirms: "The Soviet Far East can be considered guaranteed against a Japanese attack."

I think that the value of this intelligence was understood and Stalin, but then why didn't he exchange Sorge, who after

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sentenced to death for two more years in prison? Why did Beria interrogate the intelligence officer's wife, Ekaterina Maksimova, and exile her to Siberia? There, near Krasnoyarsk, in 1943, she died tragically.

On November 7, 1944, the great intelligence officer was also executed. modernity Richard Sorge.

These difficult questions remain to be answered. But this tragedy is not only Sorge. This is the tragedy of our intelligence. How many of them, the great and simple sons of our Fatherland, the knights of the "invisible front" were not heard, understood? How many of their messages, radiograms, valuable materials, paid for by life, have gone into oblivion?.. An example of this is the fate of the Corsican agent - Arvid

Harnack, executed by the Gestapo.

The anti-fascist Harnack, the son of a scientist, was educated in Germany and the USA. He was married to an American of German origin, Mildred. She was fond of the works of Marx and Lenin, led a colony of American women in Berlin. Mildred is known as a doctor of philology, a translator of German literature. Arvid Harnack's connections with Soviet intelligence go back to the early 1930s, when our

consul in Koenigsberg, and later an employee of the diplomatic mission in the German capital, Alexander Girshfeld, introduced him to the famous Chekist Artuzov, head of the INO, developer of the Trust operation. Later, in 1935, Boris Gordon, our resident in Berlin, joins the "development of Harnack". They quickly converged, since by that time Harnack had already

become clear about Hitler's adventurous plans.

Since then, Associate Professor at the University of Hesse, Advisor to the German Ministry of Economics Harnack has become our most valuable agent.

There is striking evidence of the greatest courage of two agents - Harnack ("Corsican") and Schulze-Boysen Harro ("Sergeant"), who, with the stubbornness of the doomed, transmitted and transmitted radiograms filled with information about Germany's preparations for war. You read these tragic messages, and the question sounds in your soul: how could you not believe? A titanic work has been done, and Stalin, on a document dated June 16,

1941, written truly with the blood of the hearts of the friends of our country, scrawled abuse and obscene language.

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Moreover, the document with the messages of the agents of the Berlin residency, as well as the report on the impending threat, transmitted by the intelligence leadership four days before the start of the war to the Minister of State Security Merkulov, never reached Stalin.

Merkulov simply turned out to be a coward and did not sign the report.

And after that we are surprised at the terrible defeats of the Red Army in 1941, millions of dead and captured.

However, the courageous doctor of jurisprudence Arvid Harnak knew nothing of this. He did everything he could to save the Soviet Union. On September 3, 1942, he was arrested by the Gestapo. In December, he was executed by a German imperial military court. I think that it is unlikely that Stalin later recalled him, because

the messages of the "Corsican" became only evidence of distrust and criminal inaction of the "leader of the peoples" on the eve of the war.

And yet. With all the difficulties and costs of reconnaissance and sabotage activities, the country's leadership needed fresh and reliable intelligence. And it received them.

From the Gestapo, important information was supplied by one of the most valuable agents of the Berlin residency in the entire history of its existence - Willy Lehmann. He has been working for the Soviet Union since 1935. Today it is known

that Leman was the second source after Richard Sorge, who reported the exact date of the attack of fascist Germany on the USSR.

After the vacation, having gone to work, on June 19, 1941, he learned terrible news that forced him, neglecting precautionary measures, to urgently meet with his contact, the operative worker of the residency B. Zhuravlev. Lehman reported that the Gestapo had received an order from Hitler: German troops would cross the Soviet border on the night of June 22.

However, how much information was transmitted by Leman even before this tragic date! It was thanks to him that the NKVD knew perfectly well the structure and personnel of the Gestapo and the Abwehr. Our agent promptly alerted Soviet intelligence about employees, 221

"developed" by the Gestapo, about impending arrests and provocations.

Leman saved the Soviet illegal immigrant Stefan Lang, aka Arnold Deutsch, who at one time recruited several valuable agents from the so-called Cambridge Five - K. Philby, G. Burges, D. McLean. It was Stefan who taught these young people the basics of intelligence activities.

Willy skillfully informed the Center about the internal struggle in the political leadership of Nazi Germany. Portrait of the Fuhrer and his henchmen Leman wrote from the first days of Hitler's coming to power. And if the circumstances of the "Night of the Long Knives", when Hitler finished off the leaders of the assault detachments (SA), became known to the world community almost a quarter of a century after the Munich trial of 1957, then the Kremlin knew the truth in the same 1934. The details of the defeat of the Rem detachments were transferred to Moscow by Leman. In 1935, this agent will send a telegram about the active work of

German scientists on the creation of military missiles, which will later receive the name "fau".

Two years later, the head of design bureau No. 7 of the Artillery Directorate of the Red Army, L. Korneev, wrote in a letter to Stalin: "Many countries, such as America, Japan, France, and especially Germany, are working hard and hard on the missile problem. In America, the famous professor Goddard was drafted into the army, given the rank of

general, and a large jet laboratory was built for him ... In Germany, prof. Oberth, a great authority in rocket technology, who has been working on rockets for ten years, is also drafted into the German army.

There is no doubt that these data were obtained using intelligence.

In his cipher telegrams, Willy Lehman pays attention not only to advanced rocket technology. He reports on a new armored personnel carrier that has entered service with the Wehrmacht, on a fighter with an all-metal fuselage, on submarines laid down in German shipyards, on the construction of a secret plant for the production of chemical warfare agents.

Most regrettably, as a result of Stalin's purges and repression, our intelligence almost lost this valuable

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our agent. In 1937, V. Zarubin was recalled from Berlin, with whom Leman was in touch. He is accused of betrayal. By a lucky chance, Zarubin survived and soon receives a message from Germany. Leman is alarmed, he has no instructions, acts at his own peril and risk. It seems that the Soviet Union does not really need his work. "Just when I could make good deals," he writes to Zarubin, "the firm there, in a completely incomprehensible way for me, ceased to be

interested in business relations with me." Zarubin, himself in the most difficult situation, as he can,

reassures Lehman.

Only in June 1940, a year before the war, an experienced intelligence officer A. Korotkoe went to Berlin, who resumed cooperation with the agent. Willy Lehman died in December 1942. A tragic accident happened. The anti-fascists A. Hessler and R. Barth

thrown out on parachutes fell into the clutches of the Gestapo. They transmitted a coded signal that they were working under control. But the radio operator on duty ignored the signal. The center, in turn, sends the addresses of the appearances in Berlin to the agents, including the appearance of Lehmann. On a winter evening, Willy was called to work, and he never returned home. We also had agents in England. John Cairncross, cipher clerk at Blechy Park, supplied the London residency with valuable deciphered materials. By the way, it was from London that the message received from the Cambridge group came, which later played a role in the strategic confrontation between

the Soviet Union and Germany on the Kursk Bulge. According to agents, the main attack of the Germans was heading for Kursk, but we

initially predicted it in the direction of Velikiye Luki. Fortunately, in this case, the intelligence report was believed. John Cairncross relayed another important piece of information. On the eve of the Battle of Kursk, our aviation launched several powerful air strikes against

German airfields. During the raids of Soviet attack aircraft, about five hundred fascist aircraft were destroyed. Before the battle, the German troops suffered irreparable damage.

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It is impossible not to say about the unique fate of an employee of the 4th Directorate Kvashnin. Together with Winston Churchill's son Randolph, he ended up at Tito's headquarters. When in 1944 the Germans undertook a major punitive operation against the headquarters of the Yugoslav partisans, many managed to be taken out by plane. But Randolph Churchill's group and Soviet intelligence officers led by Kvashnin had to leave the encirclement themselves.

It can be rightfully admitted that the British Prime Minister owes much to our Chekist for the salvation of his son. Kvashnin had extensive experience in guerrilla warfare and was a first-class master of subversion. He led both groups. With fighting, the British and Russians successfully left the German ring. Rapprochement with Randolph gave Kvashnin the opportunity to get information about the British ruling elite, as if from within. And let these assessments, judgments, statements of Churchill's intelligence diplomatic, political interest in them

junior

Not

had

values,

undoubted.

The special pride of the Soviet intelligence and sabotage service is the legendary militant Nikolai Kuznetsov. A lot has been written about him, as well as about Sorge, and there is no point in repeating. I want to say only about the little-known or controversial pages of Kuznetsov's life. Like any legendary person, after the death of the image

Kuznetsova "overgrown" with myths, fictions, conjectures. They wrote about him as a German from the Volga region, allegedly deported to Kazakhstan, or even Kuznetsov appeared before readers as a converted German agent. And Nikolai Ivanovich was a true Russian from Siberia, who knew the German language perfectly. Two years before the war, the local NKVD sent him to study in Moscow. He was preparing according to an individual program as a special agent, first of all, to work for the German embassy.

Kuznetsov was almost perfect for this role - a handsome man, blond, familiar with the literature and culture of Germany. He loved and knew ballet well, had friends among artists and poets. They say that many ballet stars of that time doted on him. Already before the war, Kuznetsov participated in the interception

German diplomatic pouch. It would be a rare person

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talent. Everyone who worked with him notes his amazing composure and calmness during combat operations, combined with ingenuity and lightning-fast reaction. Oberleutnant Paul Siebert-Kuznetsov did a

lot in the fascist rear. All these years, the German secret services unsuccessfully tried to figure out the Soviet agent.

Nikolai Kuznetsov died heroically in a battle with Bandera in 1944 near Lvov. He blew himself up with a grenade. He was posthumously awarded the title of Hero of the Soviet Union.

It is interesting that for several decades the name of Nikolai Kuznetsov has been associated with the most, perhaps, the most mysterious page in the history of confrontation between the sabotage services of Germany and the Soviet Union.

We are talking about the meeting of the "Big Three" in Tehran in 1943 and the planned terrorist attack against the leaders of England, the USA and the USSR. The main executor of the sabotage was to be the head of the special operations of the Nazi security service, Otto Skorzeny. The plot was revealed by

Nikolai Kuznetsov, having learned from the German intelligence officer Oster about the preparation of the operation. There were, it turns out, other sources of information. In the mid-1960s, a message

flashed in Pravda with a link to an interview in the Paris Express. The correspondent cites the words of the SS man Otto Skorzeny, who lived at that time in Madrid. "Of all the funny stories that are told about me, the most funny are

those written by historians. They claim that I was supposed to kidnap Roosevelt with my team during the Yalta Conference. This is stupidity: Hitler never ordered me to do this.

Now I'll tell you the truth about this story: in fact, Hitler ordered me to kidnap Roosevelt during the previous conference - the one in Tehran ... But, bam! (laughs) ... due to various reasons, this case could not be done with sufficient success ... "

Today there are other versions on this account. It is believed that the Germans simply did not have the strength and ability to organize such a major terrorist attack in Tehran. And the alleged threat looming over the Big Three is nothing more than a Stalinist political maneuver. Of course, skillfully carried out with the help of Soviet intelligence officers. 225

The main task of the maneuver is to lure Roosevelt to the residence of the Soviet ambassador in Tehran, where Stalin was staying. Which, in fact, was done. The American president became the guest of the Soviet leader for several days.

So far, neither one nor the other version has been documented, but in any case, the operation carried out can be proud of. After all, this is a kind of classic example of the influence of undercover intelligence on political decisions. What else can a scout dream of! During the war years, the reconnaissance and sabotage service sent more than

two thousand operational groups with a total number of about 15 thousand people behind enemy lines. It was they who created partisan detachments, worked deep in the rear, in isolation from their troops, exposed German agents, committed acts of sabotage, and liquidated fascist officials.

A grateful Russia remembers their names. These are Kuznetsov, Medvedev, Prokopyuk, Vaupshasov, Karasev, Mirkovsky, Prudnikov. It cannot be said that

the sabotage war ended everywhere with our victory. The Gestapo and the Abwehr were also on the alert. Scout Ivan Kudrya, who penetrated the Abwehr intelligence network, was betrayed and captured by the Nazis. Viktor Lyagin died heroically in Kherson, despite being tortured, he did not betray anyone. Viktor Molodtsov was shot by the

Romanians. The famous Soviet intelligence officer Kaminsky, one of the founders of the Red Chapel, shot himself when they tried to capture him.

During the Great Patriotic War, the legendary agent Friedgood died in Afghanistan. He stood at the origins of the creation of our intelligence. Indeed, he was an amazing person. Friedgood created and strengthened our intelligence positions in the Middle East, the first to penetrate Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Until now, there are legends among intelligence veterans about how Arab sheikhs, as a token of respect and gratitude, presented Friedgud with several lions, and when he refused, they presented a whole harem. Perhaps, it is unlikely that Soviet intelligence has ever received such gifts. Among the unique in the history of world intelligence are the operations "Monastery" and "Berezino".

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According to the plans of the "Monastyr", the talented Soviet agent Alexander Demyanov was introduced into the Abwehr. Subsequently, both Gehlen and Schellenberg admit that the German leadership for a long time was under the illusion that it had access to the plans and ideas of the Soviet High Command.

Operation Berezino was intended to convince Hitler that a large Wehrmacht formation was operating in the rear of the Red Army. The Germans were so sure of its existence that they helped financially, throwing weapons, food and clothing uniforms into our rear. Suffice it to say that Otto Skorzeny himself was going to leave for the formation troops.

The mythical command was awarded by Hitler and promoted in rank.

Decades have passed, but until now the American intelligence services use the materials of operations "Monastyr" and "Berezino" in the training of young intelligence officers.

THE DEFEAT OF THE "MAGIC SHOOTER"

In their memoirs, the well-known German intelligence leaders Gehlen and Walter Schellenberg proudly speak of Agent Max, the main source of strategic military information at the Red Army General Staff. And the largest saboteur of the Second World War, famous for kidnapping Mussolini, SS

Sturmbannführer Otto Skorzeny, in his memoirs, talks with interest about a secret operation, which was given a romantic name: "Magic Shooter".

Apparently, this name was inspired by the motives of Carl von Weber's opera, so beloved in Germany. But the pillars of the fascist intelligence and sabotage service miscalculated. Everything they were proud of: both Agent Max and the secret game of the Magic Shooter were developed in the offices of the Lubyanka. For almost the entire war, our scouts played a dangerous and in their own way unique game with the fascist Abwehr.

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... In August 1944, the commander of the 502nd Jaeger Battalion - a special sabotage unit of the Wehrmacht - Otto Skorzeny was summoned to the headquarters of the Supreme High Command.

The case concerned the grouping of German troops under commanded by Lieutenant Colonel Sherhorn.

General Jodl said that, according to intelligence, in the Soviet rear after the defeat of the German troops of Army Group Center, in the so-called Bobruisk Cauldron, a large group of up to two thousand people remained. It was headed by the commander of the 36th security regiment of the 286th security

Division Lieutenant Colonel Sherhorn.

Jodl directly asked Skorzeny: is it possible to withdraw "part of Sherhorn" from the encirclement? The saboteur replied positively.

Returning to the headquarters of the 502nd battalion, Skorzeny sat down to develop the operation. We must pay tribute - the Fuhrer's favorite developed and thought out the operation subtly and prudently. It is known that saboteurs dressed in the uniform of the Red Army were forbidden to smoke German tobacco and cigarettes. Russian shag has become their daily smoke.

It was planned to involve aviation in the fulfillment of the task - for dropping troops, sending sabotage groups to the rear to communicate with Sherhorn. In August, the first group

was thrown out. There was no answer. In mid-September - the second landing and a joyful message: Sherhorn's grouping was discovered. The radiogram ended with a secret signal, which was known only to the radio operator who landed in the area where the "part of Sherhorn" was located. The "magic shooter" began to act ... Our intelligence and sabotage service was not so inventive for romantic names, and therefore the "shooter" Skorzeny in the archives of the NKVD forever remained under the code name "Berezino".

Why "Berezino"? Yes, because, according to legend, the group Sherhorna was blockaded near the Berezina River in Belarus.

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The first message about the "part of Sherhorn" was transmitted to the Abwehr by the agent "Max". The one that Gehlen enthusiastically writes about in his memoirs. Our

scouts called him "Heine". The history of the agent "Heine" began long before the war. Back in 1929, on the denunciation of his friend, the GPU arrested Alexander Demyanov, a former Petrograd Polytechnic Institute student. That time the arrest was a provocation by the GPU. Demyanov was planted with a gun and was soon arrested for illegal possession of a weapon. The action was a success, Alexander went on tacit cooperation with the authorities.

He soon moved to Moscow, got a job as an electrical engineer at Mosfilm. Alexander Demyanov was a very profitable

figure for intelligence. He belonged to a noble family: great-grandfather - chieftain of the Kuban Cossacks; father - a tsarist officer who died heroically at the front; mother is an aristocrat, a graduate of the Bestuzhev courses, who is closely acquainted with one of the leaders of the white emigration, General Ulagai.

Demyanov himself was friends with director Mikhail Romm, became close friends with many actors, playwrights, and became a regular at the hippodrome and theatrical premieres.

The NKVD actively helped its agent maintain an appropriate image. Intelligence officers Ilyin and Maklyarsky made a rare "gift" for Demyanov at that time. Now he had his own horse at the hippodrome. She was pretty successful on the run. On the eve of the war, when Demyanov-"Heine" was already an experienced agent, diplomats from the German embassy and trade mission became interested in him.

It was felt throughout - the Abwehr "picked up the keys" to Demyanov. It was to be expected that with the outbreak of the war, the Germans would not forget Alexander.

However, the first failures of the Red Army hurried the scouts. It was necessary to penetrate the Abwehr network and thus obtain a reliable source capable of identifying

German agents.

Already in July 1941, permission was received to conduct Operation Monastery behind enemy lines. During this operation, the legend of the creation of an active pro-German

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underground organization Throne. And in December, Demyanov-"Heine" crossed the front line and surrendered to the Germans. He introduced himself to the Abwehrs as an emissary of the anti-Soviet organization Throne. The defector was not believed. Demyanov

was subjected to a sophisticated test. The Nazis, in order to achieve recognition, even staged the execution of our intelligence officer. However, Alexander held on. Meanwhile, the Abwehr made inquiries.

Much of what Demyanov said was confirmed. It became known that on the eve of the war, German intelligence really came into contact with him.

"Heine" was placed in the Abwehr school and underwent rigorous training. Now he was given the task of returning to Moscow, creating an agent network with the aim of infiltrating the headquarters of the Red Army.

In February 1944, "Max" - "Heine" returned to Soviet territory. Everything worked out

very well. The family supported Alexander in the fight against the Nazis. The wife actively helped, and the father-in-law, a well-known medical professor in the capital, was a reliable cover. Their apartment was used as a turnout for Throne members.

Demyanov was assigned to serve in the General Staff as a communications officer. Through him, a stream of disinformation went to the Abwehr. The radio game unfolded wider and wider. At that time, all the radio technical support of the game was entrusted to an employee of the reconnaissance and sabotage service, Fisher, later better known as Rudolf Abel. For successful work, the Germans awarded Demyanov the Iron Cross with Swords. It

should be noted that the authority of "Max" in the Abwehr was very high. His disinformation,

previously prepared by the "operators" of the General Staff and certified by the intelligence department, often pushed the Germans to make important strategic decisions. Here is just one example.

In November 1942, "Heine" informed the Abwehr: Soviet troops were preparing to deliver a powerful blow near Rzhev. The Germans pulled their divisions to Rzhev and repelled the offensive, but lost the strategic initiative in the battles near Stalingrad.

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As Gehlen admits, Max's information forced the Germans to adjust the timing of the offensive near Kursk several times. This was beneficial to our troops.

In essence, the operation "Monastery" was conceived by Soviet intelligence as counterintelligence. And she succeeded. With the help of Demyanov, several dozen German

agents.

But life has prepared a happy continuation of the "Monastery". In 1944, this operation took on the character of a strategic disinformation game. In general, our intelligence paid

special attention to radio games throughout the war, and by 1943 they had completely taken the initiative into their own hands. However, "Berezino" is a classic reconnaissance game, the pinnacle of misinformation, and therefore a special conversation about it.

It is difficult to say today who was the author of the Berezino idea. Yes deal, exactly, and not in authorship. It is important that our intelligence was able to skillfully use the situation at the front to develop a large-scale game.

And the situation went like this. In the summer of 1944, after the defeat of the Nazi troops in the "Bobruisk cauldron" in the forests of Belarus, groups of surviving German soldiers, "policemen", were hiding. They could not inflict great damage on our troops, but they delivered a lot of

hassle.

For some reason, the German command believed that large groups of officers and soldiers were preserved in the Belarusian forests, capable of breaking through the front line. In general, the leadership of Germany attached particular importance to the courage of the Wehrmacht soldiers who escaped from the encirclement. They were written about in the newspapers, they were rewarded, encouraged to leave home.

Apparently, there was also a purely pragmatic calculation here - a combat regiment in the depths of the enemy's defense is capable of causing considerable harm to rear communications, airfields, and units.

The desire of the German command to believe in the existence of such a regiment was supported by Soviet intelligence in time. Demyanov informed the Abwehr that a German unit of about two thousand people was hiding in the forests near the Berezina. It consists of more than two hundred people - the sick and the wounded. 231

Soldiers and officers are in dire need of weapons, ammunition, medicines and food. "Heine" in his radiogram added that, despite the hardships, the spirit of the Wehrmacht soldiers is high and they are ready to fight their way to their own.

The legend was thought out to the smallest detail. Lieutenant Colonel Heinrich Sherhorn was named commander of the group for a reason. In Berlin, the supernumerary 36th Security Regiment was poorly known. "Sick and wounded", and even such a number, naturally, hampered movement, fettered actions. The Germans "pecked"

immediately. A week after the radiogram "Heine" received a positive response. The Nazis were ready to support the "heroes" with medicines and ammunition. To receive cargo, the coordinates of the "part of Sherhorn" and the location of

the landing sites had to be reported. A dozen and a half experienced operatives went to the place of dropping cargo and troops. Among them were Lieutenant Colonel Isidor

Maklyarsky and Major William Fisher. They

created a false camp in the forest, dug dugouts, pitched tents. Everything was ready to receive "guests". The first landing of saboteurs

and ... the first "puncture". Of the two paratroopers managed to capture only one. The radio operator fled.

During interrogation, the arrested German agent confirmed that the task of the group was to establish contact with the encircled German unit. He also gave the password. Everything came together.

However, the game could be disrupted by an escaped radio operator. Fortunately, he escaped without a walkie-talkie.

Chekists were looking for a way out, sorted out development options events. The Germans also calculated the situation.

In October, a new radio operator, Delnikov, was received at the Sherhorn base. He agreed to work for us, gave the intelligence officers a code, a schedule of communication sessions. He was given the opportunity to go on the air. He transmitted two radiograms: about his successful arrival and thanks from Sherhorn.

Soon, Sherhorn, who had been recruited by us, was sent to the Berezino operation area. Demyanov also went there. The Germans were in a hurry. On October 9, an assault force

landed at the base: SS non-commissioned officer Panders and privates Muradyan and Bushaev. All of them served in the 502nd Jaeger Battalion under the command of Otto

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Skorzeny. The radio operator Vedenin was a cadet at the Koenigsberg reconnaissance school, and he was transferred to the battalion shortly before being thrown out in Belarus.

Vedenin, on vacation in one of the villages, having chosen a convenient moment, opened fire on the rangers-saboteurs. Bushaev was killed, Panders and Muradyan were wounded and captured by Soviet soldiers.

By that time, the Chekists had captured another group led by SS sergeant Shifer. Saboteurs also served in the 502nd Chasseur Battalion.

The landing of two groups of "Skorzeny's nestlings" could only mean that the Nazis continued to check the existence of "part of Sherhorn". True, what the captured paratroopers reported could not but rejoice.

Scherhorn's grouping was reported to Hitler. Another thing is also important - the release of saboteurs from a special battalion meant that Otto Skorzeny, an experienced, cunning enemy, joined the operation.

As it turned out later, Skorzeny had his own plan for the withdrawal of Sherhorn's group across the front line. He suggested using the legend of "working battalions": going out under the guise of German prisoners of war who are working in the front line to restore fortifications. The idea was bold, but not devoid of common sense.

The documents of the paratroopers also spoke about the fact that Skorzeny began to implement his idea. Panders and Slate were provided with certificates of sergeants of the Red Army, and their subordinates were provided with documents of soldiers of military construction units.

On October 23, the "base" received another group of saboteurs. During interrogation, they said that Hitler promised to spare no effort and means to save Sherhorn's group. Goering personally ordered

several aircraft to be allocated for the removal of fighters. A doctor and a pilot should land in a few days to select landing sites. The spiral of the radio game was rapidly unwinding. Staff doctor

Jeschke and Heinrich Wild landed on October 27, 1944. They handed Sherhorn a directive from the commander of Army Group Center, Colonel General Reinhard.

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Indeed, the four planes promised by Göring were at the ready and awaiting command. There was an impulse to take the planes with cargo and capture them along with the crews, but this meant the end of the operation. And then the intelligence leadership decided to continue the game. But for this it was necessary to convince the Germans not to send planes.

They began to convince, they say, Sherhorn is in the ring of troops Red Army, is leading heavy fighting to break the blockade.

Somewhat later, a new message left the "base": the ring was broken, we are rapidly moving west. It is not advisable to send planes. In order to misinform and create the

appearance of the movement of the "part of Sherhorn", its military operations, the Headquarters of the Supreme High Command gave the green light to the legend of the capture of a staff vehicle with secret documents. In mid-December, Sherhorn's radio operators reported to

the German command that the forces for the decisive thrust had been assembled and the transition would begin on the 20th.

The radiogram contained a plan for the movement of the group. Everything is in accordance with military science: the vanguard, the main forces, which were led by the commander himself, and the rearguard under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Michaelis.

The commander of the 52nd Chasseur Regiment Michaelis, holder of the German cross in gold, was taken to the "base" by the security officers shortly before the performance.

Intelligence was formed five operational groups. They were moving along Sherhorn's route. Acting according to the situation, the operatives pretended to be detachments of the Red Army, then for separate groups of German soldiers, then for detachments of Vlasovites.

It would seem that the Soviet intelligence officers calculated everything, but the Nazis did not get tired of arranging checks along the route of the "part of Sherhorn". The next

day after the performance, a group of six paratroopers was received at the location of the "unit". All six are natives of Belarus who have undergone sabotage training. They used to be local policemen. The Nazis offered "guests" as guides. After a conversation with the command of the group, the "guides" transmitted radiograms about the safe arrival.

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Operation Berezino was so successful that

Sherhorn decided to visit the head of the "Abwehrkommando" Ober Lieutenant von Barfeld himself. Again, as

in the last time in the case of aircraft, the leadership of the NKVD faced a dilemma - either to capture the head of the Abwehrkommando, which meant undoubted success, and complete the operation, or continue the game. His Majesty chance intervened. Von Barfeld tragically died

after the plane landed in front of the pilots. The body of the head of the "Abwehrkommando" went back on the same board. The soldiers and officers of the Sherhorn group were congratulated on Christmas and sent "gifts". One of them is

a radio beacon. The Germans now and then demanded to turn on the radio beacon. This meant that new "guests" should be expected. In the first days of the new year 1945, a team came - to reconnoiter and prepare a site for landing aircraft. We want to take the wounded.

Again, the Germans had to be convinced that a high rate of movement had been achieved, the group was quickly moving to the front line. Once again they asked for

food and reported that they were looking for landing sites. These days, the security officers, carried away by the radio game, began to "move" the "part of Sherhorn" at an accelerated pace - twenty kilometers a day. And this is with the wounded, with battles, through forests and

swamps. Isn't the pace too high and Sherhorn's movement along the rear goes smoothly? The question was not idle.

It was decided to slow down the pace, increase the "collisions" with the rear units of the Red Army, and more often report on the severity and complexity of the battles.

So long and difficult transitions, "meetings" with the enemy, losses were imitated. However, in spite of everything, "part of Sherhorn" was moving towards the borders of East Prussia.

In March 1945, good news came to the "base": the Fuhrer promoted Sherhorn and Michaelis to colonels. Their subordinates also received awards and higher ranks.

Hitler planned to send Otto Skorzeny himself to the "part of Sherhorn" to maintain morale, but the deteriorating situation on the Soviet-German front did not provide such

possibilities. 235

On the eve of the end of the war, a radiogram was received at the "base". Oberleutnant Risler, an intelligence officer of Army Group Center, thanked the soldiers and officers of the Sherhorn group for their courage and loyalty to Germany and suggested acting according to circumstances. Risler said: "Whatever the future

brings us, our thoughts will always be with you.

The future turned out to be very different for all participants in the Berezino operation. Our intelligence tried to use Sherhorn again. Now for the recruitment of the German Admiral Raeder. However, the attempt was unsuccessful.

After the war, "Heine" - "Max" were also involved, but

emigrant circles showed no interest in him. Demyanov returned to Moscow. Sherhorn, Michaelis

and two other German radio operators were repatriated to Germany. The rest of the saboteurs, both Germans and Russians, were shot. During the operation "Berezino" from September 1944

to May 1945, the Germans made four dozen sorties to the Soviet rear, landing 22 agents. All of them were arrested. More than 250 places of ammunition, cargo with weapons, food, uniforms, and medicines were delivered to the location

of the Sherhorn base. The war is over... Both intelligence agencies - Soviet and German recorded in their assets the conduct of the operation unprecedented in world intelligence practice. Otto Skorzeny called

her "Magic Shooter". In fact, she bore the more prosaic name "Berezino". However, the essence is not in the name, but in the fact that the German "Magic Shooter" suffered a crushing defeat near the banks of the Belarusian river Berezina.

BIG MYTHS OF THE "SMALL WAR"

The guerrilla, or "small war", as Mikhail Vasilievich Frunze called it, is a special chapter in the activities of the reconnaissance and sabotage service. Special not only because it was a time of fierce and deadly battle with the enemy, but also a time of strategic failures and mistakes.

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Today, decades later, many of the most incredible myths have been canonized and have found a moral and scientific basis. Or rather, pseudoscientific. Helpful historians and writers, journalists skillfully shuffled events and facts, distorting reality.

So what is true and what is false in the story of the "small war"?

Without claiming to be the most profound scientific research (although I am sure that the time for such will come), I will only outline the main controversial problems.

So guerrilla warfare. Mankind has accumulated enough experience in the theory and practice of waging this war.

In my opinion, our compatriot, well-known poet and partisan commander Denis Davydov gave the classic definition of guerrilla warfare: "Partisan warfare consists of neither very

fractional nor primary enterprises, because it is not about burning one or two barns, not disrupting pickets and not delivering direct strikes the main body of the enemy.

It encompasses and crosses the entire length of the paths from the rear of the opposing army to that expanse of land that is determined to supply its troops, food and charges, through which, blocking the flow of the source of its strength and existence, she exposes her to the blows of her army, makes

exhausted, hungry, disarmed and deprived of the saving bonds of subordination. Here is the guerrilla war in the full sense of the word."

In other words, if we formulate D. Davydov's thought in a shorter and more modern way, the main task of the partisans is to cut off the enemy troops at the front from the sources of logistic supplies. Looking ahead, I will say: the partisans of the Great Patriotic War failed to fulfill the main task of the war. Why? More on that later, but now let's go back to the beginning of the nineteenth century.

One of the first to understand the strategic importance of the partisan movement was the commander-in-chief of the Russian army, commander M.I. Kutuzov. Despite the obvious resistance of some representatives of the upper class, Kutuzov supported the popular partisan movement and sent partisan detachments, most often consisting of Cossacks, to the rear of Napoleon's communications. Soon as part of a partisan corps

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During the feast there were 30 Cossack, 7 cavalry and 5 infantry regiments, as well as several separate squadrons and battalions of the regular army. Here is just one example of

the fighting of partisans behind enemy lines. In September 1812, a detachment under the command of Denis Davydov, in which there were a little more than a hundred bayonets, defeated the French transport with provisions and ammunition with a swift blow. Interestingly, the transport was guarded by a fairly large team. But Davydov skillfully organized the attack of his detachment, consisting of the Don Cossacks and the hussars of the Akhtyrsky regiment. They ambushed, raided, and won.

It was after this success that Field Marshal Kutuzov decided to send partisan units behind enemy lines. I would like to name a few names of the first partisans. This is the major of the Volynsky Lancers Khrapovitsky, the headquarters captain of the Akhtyrsky hussar regiment of Berdyak, the lieutenant of the same regiment Makarov. The commander-in-chief united the forces of

the army and the people into a common fist in order to achieve victory over the enemy. It was a successful experience of joint military operations military and peasant partisan formations.

After the flight of the French from Moscow, the guerrilla war unfolded along the communications along which the Napoleonic troops retreated. And if, during the offensive against Moscow, the partisans forced Napoleon to leave large garrisons on their communications, to expend forces on escorting and guarding the convoys, now everything was different.

Partisan strikes acquire strategic importance. Their main goal is to disrupt the planned withdrawal of enemy troops, to deprive them of food, fodder and "saving bonds of subordination."

This was largely successful, despite the careful organization of the rear and the allocation of a sufficiently large number of forces for its

protection.

Napoleon was never able to defend his rear communications from the influence of partisans.

With the advent of railways in the second half of the 19th century the effectiveness of the guerrilla struggle has increased dramatically.

During the American Civil War, railroads served as the main targets of sabotage attacks. Then

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the destruction of bridges and railways was extremely painful for the enemy.

With the growth in the number of armies, the dependence on logistics grew. In turn, the development of the railway network increased their vulnerability to partisan attacks. In addition, the improvement of explosive devices increased the combat of even small sabotage groups. Now capabilities much partisans could inflict serious damage on the enemy without

entering into combat with him.

The history of military art knows an example when the French frontiers (partisans) in 1871 stopped the railway traffic of the Germans besieging Paris for fifteen days. The German command had no choice but to throw almost a quarter of its army to guard the rear. Imagine a quarter of the active army!

It should be noted that we have accumulated sufficient experience in conducting guerrilla warfare. The Germans themselves calculated that in 1918 about 200,000 partisans were active in Ukraine. In Siberia, entire partisan fronts fought against Kolchak and the White Czechs who had revolted: Shchitkinsky, Severo-Kansky; partisan republics operated - Altai, Ussuri, Transbaikalia.

More than 100,000 rebels fought in the rear of Denikin's troops in 1919. The partisans were so strong and active that the enemy had to withdraw from the front and bring into the Donbass the elite units of Generals Slashchev and Shkuro. The guerrilla war of 1918-1921 on the territory of our country against the

White Guards and interventionists was part of the system of military operations subordinated to the strategic plans of the Red Army command. It was carried out in combination with front-line methods of struggle, in operational and even tactical interaction with combat units. It must also be emphasized that guerrilla warfare was often the main, dominant form of counteraction to the enemy. This is how events developed in the territory occupied by the enemy after the

conclusion of the Brest peace, and during the civil war in the Far East. Before the Second World War, guerrilla struggle unfolded in Abyssinia and in Spain.

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In almost six months of fierce fighting, the Italian

the armed forces broke the resistance of the small Abyssinian army. And when the war was officially over, the Abyssinian people rose to the liberation struggle.

Mussolini had to keep up to 200 thousand regular troops and more than 300 aircraft in Abyssinia. These units, with the support of aviation, regularly carried out punitive operations against local rebels, but they did not succeed in completely defeating the Abyssinian partisans. During the Second World War, the guerrilla war unfolded with

renewed vigor and ended with the restoration of the sovereignty and independence of the country. We are most familiar with the struggle of the Spanish republican government against the

Spanish fascists who had revolted. The Nazis acted in collusion with Hitler and Mussolini. Soviet volunteers and internationalist soldiers from 56 countries of the world came to the aid of the Republicans. The Spaniards by that time had lost their guerrilla fighting skills. More than 120 years have passed since the Guerrillas of Spain waged a

guerrilla war against Napoleon. And therefore, the Spaniards were taught to fight behind enemy lines by Soviet saboteurs who had experience in the civil war. So, a small sabotage group of one and a half dozen people grew in Spain in ten months into the 14th partisan corps. Domingo Ungria commanded them, and Ilya Starinov was an adviser and instructor.

There are many glorious deeds on the account of the Spanish saboteurs. They, while still in the group, derailed the train with the headquarters of the Italian aviation division. After that, the General Staff legalized their unit, set the fighters one and a half salary and flight rations. The Nazis knew about the existence of

special sabotage units in the Republican army, but they could not reliably cover their communications. In the summer of 1937, as a result of partisan sabotage, communications between the

Madrid and Southern fronts of the rebels were interrupted for a week. Fighters-internationalists, specialists in sabotage

struggle will play their most important role in a future war. So,

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Chief of Staff of the 14th Spanish partisan corps L. Ilich will become the head of the operational department of the main headquarters of the French franchisors. Partisan Ivan

Harish participated in sabotage and liberation struggle against the Nazis in the territories of Hungary, Greece, Yugoslavia. He became a People's Hero of Yugoslavia. Many members of the International Brigadiers fought in the Soviet

Union, in Poland, Albania, France.

After World War II, veteran partisans fought for the freedom of Algeria and fought in Latin America. A special role belongs to the

insurrectionary guerrilla movement in the liberation of China from the counter-revolutionary

Kuomintang and Japanese aggressors. As

for the Soviet Union, it must be admitted with regret: with the outbreak of the war, we were not ready to conduct a partisan struggle.

Today, this conclusion seems incredible. After all, back in the 1920s and 1930s we had a well-established, well-established system of education and training of partisan, subversive personnel.

In 1921, Mikhail Vasilyevich Frunze, in his well-known article "The Unified Military Doctrine and the Red Army," stated: "If the state devotes this (i.e., the preparation of a guerrilla war. - enough serious attention, if the preparation of this" small war "is carried out systematically and systematically, then in this way it is possible to create such a situation for the armies of the enemy, in which, with all their technical advantages, they will be powerless in the face of a relatively poorly armed, but full of initiative, bold and determined enemy. "Let's repeat once again the theses of the "father" of the partisan school - serious attention of the state, systematic and systematic training. All this was. The partisan schools of the NKVD and the GRU, which trained the commanders of

sabotage units, as well as raid sabotage and parachute detachments. There were five such schools in Ukraine alone.

There was a central school in Moscow, headed by was K. Sverchevsky. It was prepared mainly by foreigners.

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The course of sabotage and partisan activity was taught in military schools and academies of the Red Army. Unit commanders had the knowledge and ability to transition to guerrilla warfare in the territories occupied by the enemy. Using the experience of the Spanish and especially Chinese

partisans, in the forests, in remote areas, the leadership of the NKVD, the intelligence department of the Red Army, secretly created bases for the deployment of a partisan movement in the future. Ammunition, weapons, food were laid in the base warehouses. That is exactly what the partisans lacked at the beginning of the war.

Partisan formations functioned in the general system of training of the Armed Forces. An example of this is the regular involvement of partisan units in combined arms exercises. And in 1932, special maneuvers of partisan brigades took place in the Moscow region.

During these years, we were able to deploy in Belarus several partisan detachments numbering up to 3 thousand people. In Ukraine, in the Leningrad region, the same intensive work was carried out. In addition, in the border towns, at the railway stations, the NKVD introduced its secret agents, underground saboteurs.

But then how could it happen that in June 1941 in Kyiv, when they rushed to create partisan detachments, they did not find a single more or less trained specialist in partisan warfare? Things were no better in other places.

Ilya Grigoryevich Starinov, the legendary partisan saboteur, recalls how in July 1941, five kilometers from Roslavl, among swamps and thin woodlands, he found the buildings of the Peat Extraction Department. Workers of the apparatus of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, who were engaged in the formation of partisan detachments, were housed here. "I went to Roslavl," says Starinov. - On the way, Eidinov (Secretary of the Central

Committee of the Party of Belarus) brought up to date: there are no specialists in partisan tactics and equipment at the point, there is no equipment either, but detachments are being formed, people are given specific tasks - to destroy fascist soldiers and officers, destroy various military facilities and iron roads, interfere with communications.

- And how to do it - teach?

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Eidinov shrugged his shoulders:

"Well, they'll figure it out

themselves." The country turned out to be completely unprepared to fight the Germans

in the rear. And it began with the transition to a new military doctrine.

Remember, the views of the Soviet leadership were clearly formulated by the then People's Commissar of Defense Kliment Voroshilov: to beat the enemy with little blood and on foreign territory. Well, if on foreign territory, why partisan bases, warehouses with weapons, ammunition? Bases have been eliminated. But even if you had to fight on the enemy's land, then

still someone had to fulfill Stalin's Voroshilov testament: to beat the enemy. Including in his rear.

But who then, in 1937, thought about it. They began to think in the forty-first, but too late. In the dungeons of the NKVD, thousands of commanders and saboteurs, experts in guerrilla warfare, died as "enemies of the people". The same Ilya Starinov recalls 1937

in this way. in early November, "I returned to Moscow (from was stunned when I found out that all my bosses M.B.) Spain. - 1937) and in all the lines where I served and studied were subjected to repression. I was summoned to the NKVD and during interrogation they said that preparation for a guerrilla war in case of aggression is an idea of the enemies of the people Yakir, Uborevich and others. It was recognized as wrong to prepare "gangs". I saw how we are heading for disaster. "For many surviving professionals, the disaster was obvious. The base of the partisan movement was liquidated, personnel were destroyed partisan specialists.

It is also inexplicable that before the war we intensively increased the capacity of the railways in the Western direction. Our railways had three times the German capacity. Instead of leaving it

at the same level, the Soviet Union built new entrances. The rails were obligingly supplied by Germany. Of course, in exchange for grain.

The first steps of Stalin and the government of the country to lead the partisan movement with the outbreak of war turned out to be extremely unprofessional.

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On July 3, 1941, in an address to the Soviet people, Stalin stated: "In the areas occupied by the enemy, it is necessary to create partisan detachments, horse and foot, to create sabotage groups to fight against parts of the enemy army, to blow up bridges, roads, damage telephone and telegraph communications, set fire to forests, warehouses and convoys. Everything Stalin said was

insane. If someone other than Stalin had called for the burning of forests, he would have been immediately branded as an enemy of the people and thrown into prison. The burning of forests was beneficial to the Germans, not to the partisans. Stalin's appeal did

not contain the main task of the partisan forces - to cut off the enemy troops from the sources of logistic supplies, but the order was to destroy food. The Germans had their own supplies, but the partisans, without food, destroyed at the call of the

"father of the peoples", had a hard time. Stalin's speech pushed the central and local authorities to a thoughtless, unprepared, hasty formation of partisan detachments and

their transfer to the occupied territory.

They trained sabotage groups for no more than a week, and according to the experience of previous training in the 20-30s, this took up to six months.

On July 18, 1941, the Central Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks issued a resolution "On the organization of the struggle in the rear of the German troops." Most strikingly, it was aimed at guerrilla warfare rather than serious warfare behind the front lines. The decree ordered the deployment of a network of underground Bolshevik organizations that would lead the fight behind enemy lines. But the underground, as you know, was extremely

vulnerable. Experienced German secret services acted against the underground, and the fate of the underground, as a rule, turned out to be very sad. What kind of leadership of the partisans is there, they themselves would survive. However, after the war, the myth of the leading role of the Bolsheviks

underground workers were intensively propagated by Soviet propaganda.

So, what did the ill-conceived transfer to the rear of hastily formed, unprepared partisan detachments lead to?

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By March 1942, about 2 thousand partisan detachments and sabotage groups were thrown into the territory of Ukraine, but Moscow had data on combat activity for only 240 of them. And by the summer of that year, there were 778 detachments in Ukraine, but only 22 actually operated.

Here is the report of the partisan radio operator Sergei Melnichenko,

abandoned behind enemy lines in 1941. It was found in the archives. This is undoubtedly unique evidence of the criminal miscalculations of our leadership in the development of guerrilla warfare.

"On September 8, 1941," Melnichenko reports, "with a group of 39 people, on the instructions of the 4th Directorate of the NKVD, we drove towards the front to the Vorozhba region to cross the front line. Attempts to contact the headquarters of the front and get topographic maps and a place to cross the front line from him were unsuccessful.

They met fleeing fighters, but they did not know where the front was. Having no topographic maps, not knowing the area, on the 11th afternoon we found at the Vorozhba station a locomotive left during the evacuation and a broken car, we plunged and drove towards the front ... We stopped

at the Nemilovka station - this was the rear of the enemy. Late in the evening we

tried to establish radio contact, but we did not succeed, since the equipment was completely unfamiliar to us and we had to master it already behind enemy lines. On September 12, at dawn, we set out on a hike,

ourselves not knowing in what direction, since there was neither a map nor a compass. The command, illiterate in military-tactical terms, led us where we would go.

The path was incredibly difficult, as people were overloaded - they carried too much, ammunition and food supplies. On the same day,

we met the first partisan group from the rural asset of the village of Kazachye, left to work in the rear. They were armed with a heavy machine gun, from which they almost killed us.

With us was the commander of the detachment Voloshin (an extremely mediocre person). At

dawn on September 13, we reached the long-awaited Belyaevsky Forest ... Commander Voloshin went to bed, without sending either reconnaissance or sending people in search.

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In the evening we had to cross the river. The commander of the detachment, Voloshin, with three commanders of sabotage groups, went to organize the crossing, and from there they all deserted. On this day, we choose

another commander, Comrade Gorbushko. Communication is excellent all day, we do not receive specific assignments, we listen to the situation at the front every day.

On the evening of September 18 they performed. We walked through the villages of Veseloe, Pogarichi, Budishche. They walked all night, led by the commissar of the detachment, Comrade Korotun, who did not know the area and without a map. They wandered through swamps and meadows flooded with water. All wet, exhausted, frozen."

However, time passed, and the detachments and groups abandoned to the rear, having settled in, familiarized themselves with the situation, began to act. Although there were few of them, it became necessary to coordinate the combat work of the partisans. And in December 1941, Stalin ordered the creation of the Central Headquarters of the partisan

movement (TSSHPD). Instead of appointing an experienced partisan saboteur as chief of staff, the Supreme Commander entrusted leadership to a party worker, secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Belarus, Ponomarenko. True, the headquarters did not last long. Already in January 1942

he was liquidated. And in May they re-created it.

In September, the post of Commander-in-Chief of the partisan movement was approved. This post was taken by K. Voroshilov. In November, the post of Commander-in-Chief was abolished. On March 7, 1943, the TsSHPD was once again dispersed.

IN

April restored again.

And yet, despite the active headquarters "pandemonium", the partisan movement was growing stronger and gaining strength. The partisans learned to fight.

By the summer of 1943, Soviet partisan formations numbered 120 thousand people.

Two incredibly difficult years of war have passed. Through failures and mistakes, at the cost of hundreds of deaths, losses, blood, the experience of guerrilla warfare came, awareness of one's role in the common struggle, knowledge and skills came.

The partisan movement turned into a powerful force. Today, specialists and analysts of the reconnaissance and sabotage service have calculated that with proper planning and skillful delivery of ammunition and mine explosives, 246

the partisans were capable of wrecking 10-12 thousand trains within 3-4 months. However, here the Center imposed on them the wrong tactics.

And this is another myth of guerrilla warfare. A dozen or two years ago, every schoolboy knew him. We are talking about the so-called "rail war" of the Soviet partisans.

In 1943, two operations of the "rail war" took place. The first was started by the Bryansk partisans on the night of July 22, and the second, called "Concert", was held in September-November.

Unfortunately, these operations did not give the expected results. For some reason, Moscow was counting on the lack of rails from the Nazis. But there were enough rails, and the enemy learned how to weld them or used a metal bridge that covered the place where the rail broke.

There was another circumstance that was not taken into account at the Central Headquarters: since it was ordered to blow up the rails, and not the trains, then it is easier and safer to carry out explosions, for example, on sidings, away from the German guards. They acted like that. In August 1943, the partisans blew up 200 thousand rails, while the Nazis had 11 million rails. So the effectiveness of the rail war turned out to be small. It was another miscalculation of the country's leadership.

But despite the obvious mistakes and miscalculations of the supreme power, the partisans on the ground still did their main job. They fought the enemy. By the spring of 1944, the number of partisan forces and
created

on their basis, the national liberation armies in the rear of the Nazis amounted to one million three hundred thousand people. By that time, these were well-organized and trained detachments, formations, and even partisan armies. They did not have aircraft, tanks, a large number of artillery, but morale was unusually high. They skillfully used the advantage of sabotage tactics and mine-explosive equipment. During the war years, Soviet partisans destroyed, wounded, captured about one and a half million enemy

soldiers and officers, and derailed 18,000 trains. Our saboteurs assisted the peoples of Poland, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Yugoslavia, France and other European countries in launching a partisan war.

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"The history of wars," admitted the former Colonel General of the Wehrmacht Lothar Rendulich, "does not know a single example when the partisan movement would play such a role as it played in the last world war. In its size, it represents something new in

military art. Due to the colossal impact that it had on the front-line troops and on the problems of supply, logistics and control in the occupied areas, it became part of the concept of total war. And if there were skillful leadership and a reserve of experienced partisans who died in Beria's prisons, and regular help from the mainland ... What

would the Nazi generals say then? Right, I don't know. But I know what the oldest partisan saboteur, colonel, professor Ilya Starinov said, listing these "ifs" ... If all this had taken place, the German army would have been defeated a year earlier, with

significantly fewer losses for us. But fate did not give us such a chance.

THE LAST FRONTIER AT THE KREMLIN

This fact from the history of the Great Patriotic War is well known today. Marshal Georgy Konstantinovich Zhukov describes him this way in his book *Memories and Reflections*. "The battles that took place on November 16-18 were very difficult

for us. The enemy, regardless of the losses, climbed ahead, trying at any cost to break through to Moscow with their tank wedges. I don't remember exactly what date - it was shortly after the tactical breakthrough of the Germans in the sector of the 30th Army of the Kalinin Front - I called I.V. Stalin asked:

- Are you sure that we will keep Moscow? I ask you it's a pain in the ass. Speak honestly like a communist."

These questions of the Supreme speak volumes. And what if the enemy broke into the capital?.. History does not know the subjunctive mood, and yet I have always been interested in this "if". Who would meet the enemy? Who would be on that last frontier to the Kremlin?

It turned out that there were such people and such a connection existed. Their defense area was located along Gorky Street from the Belorussky railway station to the Kremlin. The leading edge ran along the Moscow-Belarusian railway. On the right flank - to the Butyrskaya outpost, on the left - to the Vagankovsky cemetery. As the historian Alexander Zevelev wrote: "If these orders are translated from laconic military language into "civilian", then we can say: OMSBON was ordered to close the approaches to the center of Moscow and the Kremlin."

OMSBON is a separate motorized rifle brigade for special purposes. I must say right away - a unique military unit. The first regiment of this brigade was formed by Georgy Dimitrov, Wilhelm Pick, Maurice

Thorez, Palmiro Togliatti, Jose Diaz, Dolores Ibarruri, Clement Gottwald, Johann Koplenig, Harry Pollit. I don't think these people need any introduction. They did everything possible to gather their compatriot political emigrants scattered throughout the Soviet Union and transport them to OMSBON.

The international regiment numbered about a thousand fighters. About a third are Spanish communists who left their homeland after the defeat of the Spanish Republic.

The other part is Bulgarians, Czechs, Slovaks, Poles, Austrians, Hungarians, Yugoslavs, Romanians, Greeks, Italians, Germans, Vietnamese, French, Finns. There were also a few English people. The second regiment was not inferior to the first.

It included famous Soviet athletes: boxers Nikolai Korolev and Sergei Shcherbakov, athletes brothers Georgy and Serafim Znamensky, Grigory Ermolaev, wrestlers Grigory Pylnov, Leonid Egorov, Shalva Chikhladze, weightlifters Nikolai Shatov, Vladimir Krylov, rowers Alexander Dolgushin, Alexei Smirnov, speed skaters Konstantin Kudryavtsev, Anatoly Kapchinsky, skier Lyubov Kulakova.

In total, there were about 800 athletes in OMSBON. Volunteers were also enrolled in the regiment - students of Moscow universities. As the brigade commander, Colonel Mikhail Orlov, wrote, "there were both plump-lipped first-year students and balding graduate students." 249

Many fighters were yesterday's students and graduate students of Moscow State University, ~~historical and technical~~ ~~historical and technical~~ mine tool and other institutes. A whole platoon - thirty people - was sent to OMSBON by the then-famous Institute of

History, Philosophy and Literature. It was called the "Soviet Lyceum" for a reason. Excellent poets studied there - Y. Levitansky, S. Gudzenko. They also became fighters of a separate motorized rifle brigade ...

In 1942, after one of the most difficult battles, in which Semyon Gudzenko was wounded in the stomach, he would write, in my opinion, one of his best poems about the war.

It contains the greatest depth of comprehension of the terrible minutes before the

attack... It seems to me that I am a magnet, that I attract mines. Gap - and the lieutenant wheezes. And death passes by again. But we can no longer wait. And we are being led through the trenches by the numb enmity, by the bayonet piercing necks. The fight was short. And then They choked the icy vodka, And I plucked someone else's blood from under my nails with a knife.

OMSBON arose

and was originally called the troops of the Special Group under the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the USSR. The head of the Special

Group was brigade commander Pavel Bogdanov. It consisted of two brigades. The battalions consisted of detachments, detachments from special groups.

In October 1941, the troops of the special group were reorganized into a separate motorized rifle brigade of the NKVD of the USSR, consisting of two regiments.

In this form, it operated until October 1943. Then her goals change. She goes to perform special tasks of the high command behind enemy lines. Now it is called the Separate Special Purpose Detachment of the NKGB of the USSR.

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Over the years of the war, this unique formation sent 212 detachments and special forces groups numbering more than 7 thousand people behind the front line, into the enemy rear.

The brigade, in fact, began its journey from Red Square, from the November 1941 parade. OMSBON member, Bulgarian Ivan Vinarov, future lieutenant general of the Armed Forces of Bulgaria, recalled those days as follows: "... None of us doubted that this

time the parade and demonstration of Moscow workers would not take place ... Hitler's aviation could fly to the Kremlin literally in a matter of minutes and turn the festive parade into a parade of death .. So we thought, and none of us connected the training of individual military formations and their drill with the upcoming holidays.

However, the parade, which would later be called historical, took place. The fighters of the OMSBON also participated in it. And then there was the winter of forty-one. By

this time, Hitler already believed that the time had come for the final blow and the defeat of the Soviet Union. Moscow remained the main obstacle to the strategic goals of the Nazis. The capture of the capital of the Soviets was supposed to frighten the world.

Operation "Typhoon", the result of which was to be the collapse of Moscow, was prepared scrupulously, carefully, with German thoroughness. 42 percent of the personnel, 33 percent of the guns and mortars, and 75 percent of the tanks of the Soviet German front were concentrated near Moscow. We were inferior to the enemy in all positions. In order

to better understand the tasks of the

OMSBON in protecting the capital, let us recall: it was here, in the Moscow direction, that the Nazis concentrated most of their best reconnaissance and

sabotage forces. At the forefront of the 4th German Army followed the special command "Moscow", created from the police and partly the SD. The fighters of this special team

were ordered to break into Moscow on the shoulders of advanced units and seize the buildings of the leading party, Soviet and government bodies, arrest the most prominent figures of the state and deal with them. 251

An operation codenamed "Kremlin" was being prepared. The German command addressed its troops in this way: "Soldiers! Before us is Moscow! During the two years of the war, all the capitals of the continent bowed before you, you walked through the streets of the best cities. Moscow is left for you... Walk through its squares. Moscow is the end of the war. Moscow is a vacation. Forward!" On October 5, the State Defense Committee adopted a special resolution on the defense of Moscow.

But a week later, another GKO decree was issued. It spoke about the urgent construction on the outskirts of the city and in the capital of the Moscow defense zone. The zone consisted of a security strip and two defensive lines. The first line passed along the route Khlebnikov - Zvenigorod - Naro-Fominsk and further along the left bank of the Pakhra River. Directly

the Moscow frontier went along the outskirts of the city. Moscow itself was prepared for defense. And the Germans, meanwhile, rushed forward. 51 fascist divisions were aimed at Moscow. A particularly difficult situation developed in November in the zone of the 30th and 16th armies, commanded by D. Lelyushenko and K. Rokossovsky. Here the Germans rushed along the Leningrad

highway to Klin, from there to Solnechnogorsk and along the Volokolamsk highway to Istra. Later, Soviet military leaders and historians will call these days

"days of greatest danger for the capital".

Where was the Separate Special Purpose Brigade at that time? She was at the forefront of the blow of the main forces. OMSBON members were instructed to create a barrier zone on the borders near Moscow. The concept of "fence" includes many things. This is not only the construction of anti-tank and anti-personnel obstacles, but also the mining of roads, fields, buildings, the construction of blockages, ditches, false obstacles. Special groups of 4-5 people were formed from the brigade. The duties of such a group included a sapper

shovel, a crowbar to dig a hole in the frozen ground and lay explosives there. And the frosts, as you know, were fierce at that time. had to

work with cold hands. Complexity
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was that the slightest inaccuracy, a mistake could lead to an explosion. And then the OMSBO

sappers found a way out: the mines were equipped

in peasant houses and transferred assembled to the pits. Fortunately, a special fuse was also invented, which saved the lives of many sappers. There is a glorious combat episode in the

history of OMSBON. Company commander M. Zagorodnikov spoke about him in his memoirs. But the fact is that the sappers of one of the units of the brigade

were instructed to prepare for the explosion a section of the Leningrad highway, along which the Nazis broke through to Moscow.

The sappers manually dug several dozens of 2-meter-deep pits and planted explosives. The pits were closed in a chain and went out to the main electric highway.

When the work was almost completed, the Germans broke through to Solnechnogorsk. But the order to blow up the highway did not come. The enemy tank guns were already thundering, the Nazis were moving towards the sapper unit. A fight ensued. Ammunition was running out. But the sappers did not retreat. Finally the order came. Explosion! Four kilometers of the road flew into the air. By the way, the order was brought by the fearless

motorcyclist Spaniard Gross. Athletes-motorcyclists acted especially boldly in a military

situation. Motorcycle tester Eduard Koloshin flew into the city of Yamuga at full speed. An hour ago the city was ours, now the Germans have captured it. Once in the midst of the Nazis, Koloshin threw grenades at them and, taking advantage of the panic in the enemy camp, sped away.

Another cross-country biker, country championship winner Ravil Gubaidulin, risking his life, broke through to the sappers working on the highway near Klin. The sappers urgently needed detonators, and Ravil brought them, stuffing them into the sleeves and skirts of his own padded jacket, risking an explosion at any second.

The sappers of the brigade worked in the Moscow region - on the Mozhaisk highway, along the banks of the Setun River, on the Kiev highway near the Nikulino state farm, on Pyatnitskoye highway, near the village of Pokrovskoye

Streshnevo. OMSBON members mined various parts of the area and near Tula. There was a large detachment of sappers operating there.

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The result of their activities was the installation of 40 thousand mines. And this is only by the forces of one brigade. For comparison, I will say that the entire Kalinin Front installed only 4500 mines. The losses of the Germans from the mines of the OMSBONs are also known. And they are considerable - 30 tanks, 20 armored cars, 68 vehicles with motorized equipment, 53 motorcycles. In addition, units of the brigade seized dozens of cars, motorcycles, and machine guns.

When the situation around Moscow stabilized somewhat, the brigade returned to its immediate duties - conducting in-depth reconnaissance, sabotage, blocking railway junctions and lines, and forming partisan detachments. The complexity of the situation was that the scouts

OMSBON members did not have to rely on the imaginary Bolshevik underground, which allegedly led and directed the partisan movement. Yes, on July 18, 1941, a resolution of the Central

Committee of the All-Union Communist Party of Bolsheviks "On the organization of the struggle in the rear of the German troops" was issued. However, there was nothing sensible in this decision.

The experience of Spain turned out to be completely discarded, where a control system for partisan detachments was introduced through special headquarters and it was proposed to "deploy a network of our Bolshevik underground organizations in the occupied territory to direct all actions against the fascist invaders." However, as experience has shown, the underground was extremely vulnerable, and

there was no question of any "deployment of a network" and "leadership" by the partisans.

Experienced Chekists-saboteurs, such as, for example, Dmitry Medvedev, understood this well, and therefore OMSBON relied only on its own strength.

Already in the summer of 1941, a detachment of senior lieutenant V. Zuenko and a reconnaissance group consisting of associate professor of Moscow State University Ya. Kumachenko, teacher of the Institute of Foreign Languages 3. Pivovarova and radio operator N. Abramkin were abandoned on the territory of the Smolensk region. The scouts got a job as

translators at the headquarters of the German tank division and managed to win the trust of the Nazis. They moved along with the headquarters and Nazi tanks to Moscow, passing on valuable information.

In October, the group managed to safely leave the headquarters and connect with the Zuenko detachment.

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That same summer, several operational groups were sent to the occupied territory of Belarus, Ukraine, the Oryol and Kursk regions. One of them was preparing the detachment "Mitya" under the leadership of Medvedev for the transfer to the rear of the enemy. For several months, a detachment operated in the Smolensk

region under the leadership of an experienced Chekist, Far Eastern partisan A. Flegontov. From July to October 1941, a special special group of OMSBON created bases

for the deployment of detachments in the Gomel region, in the Bryansk and Oryol regions.

Medvedev's detachment will successfully operate behind enemy lines. He accounted for three blown up railway and seven highway bridges, ten destroyed enemy aircraft, three military echelons derailed, several defeated German garrisons, communication points, disabled factories.

The Medvedev partisans killed two German generals, 17 officers, about 500 soldiers, executed 45 traitors to the Motherland. After the detachment returned from the deep rear, the

feat of the outstanding Soviet boxer, OMSBON member Nikolai became known

The Queen, who saved his wounded commander from the clutches of the Nazis. When the

chastisers surrounded the detachment in the area of Kletoi, Medvedev was wounded in the battle. Korolev carried the commander out from under the fire, but suddenly they ran into the Germans, inevitable death awaited them. However,

Nikolai went to the trick, he lowered the commander to the ground and raised his hands up. The Germans, under guard, escorted Korolev to the partisan dugout. Here Nikolai knocks down three guards with unexpected blows and throws a grenade into the dugout.

The detachment, taking advantage of the confusion of the enemy, escaped from the ring. Korolev carried Medvedev for many kilometers.

On January 14, 1942, the Mitya detachment, having crossed the front line, returned to Moscow.

A month later, the Pravda newspaper will write: "A partisan detachment commanded by D. Medvedev returned from the deep rear. The detachment stayed in the territory occupied by the Nazis for four months and accomplished many glorious deeds during this time. 255

The experience gained by the Medvedev team is carefully analyzed at the brigade headquarters. On its basis, future reconnaissance and sabotage operations behind enemy lines are being developed. Moreover, the winter and spring of 1942 was a time of intensive formation of special groups and their mass sending behind enemy lines.

One of the reports to Hitler said: "During the winter of 1941/42, fanatically inclined and devoted parties who had undergone military training or career officers were transported or parachuted into the German rear through the front line ..."

In the report, this fact was considered as a desire to provide the partisans with experienced commanders, and the punitive task was to destroy the paratroopers.

In the report to Hitler, it was not by chance that one of the methods of crossing over the front line was named - parachuting. This approach had many advantages. After all, "foot" dispatch has always been associated with great risk while crossing the front line, with dangers on the route of movement, with difficulties in long-distance crossing, and a strict limit of food and ammunition.

For the deployment of combat groups behind enemy lines, already in December 1941, the OMSBON was given an air link. True, it was relatively small, with a weak material base, and yet the pilots of the air service of the brigade made about 350 sorties. They not only ensured the release of sabotage groups, but during

the period of being behind enemy lines they transferred ammunition, uniforms, weapons and food to the OMSBO members. The report of the brigade commander of the western front commander Colonel M. Orlov to the G. Zhukov has

been preserved in the archives. On the report, the commander's handwritten resolution: "Destroy the Smolensk-Orsha, Smolensk-Vyazma railways ...,

reconnaissance and accurate accounting of approaches to the lines of the Western Front, to reveal the concentration of troops in the area of Minsk, Bobruisk, Vitebsk,

Gomel. These tasks were assigned to the OMSBON detachments, which were simultaneously thrown behind enemy lines, had a common task and operated on the same territory in the so-called "Smolensk triangle". 256

The combat experience gained during the period of operations in the Smolensk region was invaluable. Here, for the first time, a simultaneous exit to the rear of the enemy was carried out not by individual sabotage groups, but by several powerful detachments at once. They delivered massive strikes on strategically important highways. These blows were a serious help to the front. So, from April

to June 1942, Major P. Korovin's sabotage detachment effectively operated on the Dorogobuzh-Smolensk highway. The simultaneous exit of several groups of P. Korovin to the Smolensk-Vyazma highway gave a significant result. Twice saboteurs

put it out of action over a fairly long distance.

In total, due to the efforts of the fighters of Major Korovin's detachment, the movement was interrupted for 50 days. Demolitionists derailed 11 echelons of the enemy, disabled two bridges, and blew up several dozen vehicles.

They also successfully operated in the "Smolensk triangle" detachments of Bazhanov, Khvostov, Artamonov.

At the end of 1942, the head of the engineering troops of the Western Front, Major General M. Vorobyov, wrote in a letter addressed to the leadership of the NKVD: coped

with the task and confirmed the expediency of expelling them. The OMSBON command also made extensive use of the Vitebsk Gates to send their groups behind enemy lines - a forest corridor in the sector of the armies of the Kalinin Front leading to the forests of the Vitebsk and northern Smolensk regions.

In January 1942, the Pobeda detachment under the command of I. Kuzin went behind enemy lines. The detachment moved on skis for a month to the Borisovsky district of the Minsk region. It was one of the first detachments of "Muscovites" in Belarus. Soldiers in army uniforms with machine guns aroused joy and admiration among the locals. Kuzin established contact with the partisans of Konstantin Zaslonov. In March, the front line was crossed by the detachment

"Local" under the Hero of the Soviet Union command of the future Lieutenant Colonel S. Vaupshasov.

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In October, it was landed in the Bryansk region

special group "Falcon" under the leadership of an experienced intelligence officer K. Orlovsky. It

was he who subsequently developed the operation, code-named "Boar Hunt" to eliminate the Gauleiter of Belarus Koch and the head of the district fascist administration, the Gebitskommissar Fens. The idea was based on intelligence data - the Nazis wanted to entertain Fens with a

wild boar hunt. The detachment has been in ambush since 6 o'clock in the morning, but Orlovsky decides to attack the Nazis when they return from hunting.

In the snow, in the cold, the partisans are waiting for twelve long hours, and here comes the convoy. In the sleigh, in a bear's coat lies Fence.

Orlovsky throws the first checker. Preparing to throw the second, but a stray bullet hits the detonator. The checker explodes in the hand. The Spaniard Justo Lopez

pulled the commander out of the fire, made a dressing. A partisan surgeon performed

an operation: he amputated his right arm and left hand. There were no painkillers. The only tool was a hacksaw. But Orlovsky bravely endured the operation.

Three months later, he radioed to Moscow: "I recovered. He took command of the detachment. But the Center insisted on returning Orlovsky to Moscow. He agreed only with the third call, at the end of 1943. In the summer of the same year, two more partisan units were formed

on the basis of the Orlovsky detachment: the Kirov and Sverdlov detachments. In August 1943, a brigade under the command of Chekist S. Vaupshasov (Gradov) receives a

sabotage group of Captain A. Mironov and transports it to the base of the Sokol detachment.

In the Minsk region, a special group "Yuri" operated under the leadership of an experienced Chekist Yu. Kutsin, which included German anti-fascists. The group's scout Karl Kleinyunge worked under the name of Ober-Lieutenant of the field gendarmerie Otto Schulz.

In June 1942, the reconnaissance and sabotage detachment "Braves" was abandoned in the area of the Zlenka station. The Chekist A. Rabtsevich was at the head of the

detachment. December 24, 1943 in a telegram addressed to the NKVD, Commander of the 1st Belorussian Front Army General K. Ro

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Kossovsky notes: "Given the successful work behind enemy lines of the special detachments of your people's commissariat, operating under the command of comrades. Kaminsky, Matveev, Shikhov and who provided significant assistance in the destruction of the Uneh and Gomel railway junctions of the enemy, we ask you to provide further assistance to the Belorussian Front by sending your sabotage and reconnaissance detachments to influence transportation and destroy the main railway communications behind enemy lines. In response to the request of K. Rokossovsky, the OMSBON command

will form three more sabotage detachments. In January 1944, the scouts will say goodbye to Moscow and move through Bryansk and Unecha to the city of Rechitsa, to the headquarters of the 1st Belorussian Front. Along with Belarus, one of the main directions for the deployment of detachments and special groups of OMSBON will be the Ukrainian Polissya and the Dnieper region. The headquarters

of the Supreme High Command was in dire need of intelligence information from the regions of Rovno, Ukraine, from Vinnitsa, near which Hitler's headquarters was located, as well as from such large cities as Kyiv and Lvov. The "Winner" detachment was

sent to Ukraine, headed by the famous partisan commander Dmitry Medvedev. The detachment also included scout Nikolai Kuznetsov, whose name would become legendary in a few years. It is he who will develop bold operations and, together with his comrades-in-arms,

execute the Supreme Judge of Ukraine, Ober Fuhrer SS A. Funk, Deputy Reichskommissar of Ukraine, General G. Knut, Ministerial Advisor to Finance G. Gel, Hitler's executioner A. Winner. It is Kuznetsov who will carry out a daring kidnapping of the commander of the punitive expedition, Major General von Elgen, from his own residence, and

will kill the Vice-Governor of Galicia, Dr. Bauer. Support in his heroic deeds will be the fighters of the detachment

"Winner" and underground partisans of Rovno and Lvov.

In 1943-1944, the OMSBON command increased assistance to the partisans of the Baltic republics and Poland. The detachments "Combat", "Guard", "Druzhina" operated here.

A special role was assigned to the reconnaissance detachment "Guadalajara". His scouts under the guise of officers and soldiers of the Spanish "Blue Division" penetrated into Vilnius and Kaunas.

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The OMSBON fighters - Poles and Germans - conducted reconnaissance in Warsaw, Krakow, and the cities of East Prussia. The

scouts did not ignore the Caucasus either. In 1942 alone, six operational detachments numbering 500 people were sent there.

The activities of intelligence officers, including OMSBON, were highly appreciated by G. Zhukov. "Of course, thanks to the brilliant work of Soviet intelligence in the spring of 1943," he wrote, "we had a number of important information about the grouping of German troops before the summer offensive ... Well-functioning intelligence ... was one of the components in the sum of others that ensured the success of this greatest battles."

And here is how our enemies assessed the actions of intelligence officers and partisans already in 1944. Hitler's General G. Guderian testified: "... a small war behind the front line ... had a decisive influence on the outcome of entire battles, for example, in 1944 on the central sector of the Eastern Front." Since the beginning of 1944, radio operators of special

groups and OMSBON detachments received radiograms from the Center, in which it was prescribed: with the approach of the front, without waiting for further

orders to move west. And they were

moving. OMSBON detachments - N. Prokopyuk, V. Karasev, E. Mirkovsky, A. Rabtsevich left for the territory of the countries of Eastern Europe.

At the final stage of the war, the Headquarters sent several special groups of the Special Forces Brigade to East Prussia and Germany, directly to Berlin.

After the end of the war, in 1946, the brigade, or, as it was called by that time, the Separate Special Purpose Detachment of the NKGB of the USSR, was disbanded. In essence, for many decades the country will remain without a special unit of the appropriate level. And only 33 years later, the Afghan events will push the country's leaders to create a reconnaissance and sabotage unit. They will be "Zenith", "Cascade" and subsequently "Vympel". However, let's not forget that Vympel did not grow out of nowhere. His predecessor was the glorious OMSBON.

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PART FOUR VICTIMS OF THE "ATOMIC PROJECT"

At the end of 1942, our intelligence received data: the British dropped a landing force in Norway. The paratroopers were unsuccessful. Due to difficult weather conditions, the plane and the towed glider with the fighters crashed. Another aircraft broke the towline and the glider landed far from the target.

There were no German facilities in this region of Norway, except perhaps a plant that produced ... water. True, the water in the factory settling tanks turned out to be not simple, but heavy. Today every schoolboy will tell you that heavy water is an integral element of nuclear research, and then a lot was unknown, new, top secret. And, perhaps, the unsuccessful sabotage operation of the allies would not have been given much

importance in Moscow, if not for two circumstances. Firstly, the British repeated their raid on a German plant in Norway three months later, and secondly, the very

approach to organizing sabotage was alarming. The fact is that we had an agreement with the British special services on the joint use of agents in the countries of Scandinavia and Europe in carrying out acts of sabotage. But this time the British did not ask for help. It seemed that, on the contrary, they tried to make the Soviets learn less about paratroopers.

The explosion at the plant was nevertheless carried out, and Germany lost some reserves of heavy water.

According to those who were involved in the Soviet nuclear program, it was this sabotage by the British at the German plant in Vemork, in Norway, that became a turning point in

building our nuclear weapons. Stalin finally
believed in the reality of creating an atomic bomb.

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True, there is another opinion: allegedly, Stalin launched our active nuclear research under the pressure of circumstances. Already too much by the beginning of 1943 was talking about the work of the Germans, Americans, British on their own atomic projects.

Suffice it to say that rumors about work on super-powerful weapons began to seep into the Soviet Union as early as 1940. However, our leading scientists expressed the opinion that such weapons are a matter of the future. As you know, Stalin, talking with our

resident in Washington, the famous intelligence officer Vasily Zarubin, before he was sent to America in October 1941, did not say a word about the "superweapon". Zarubin's main task is political influence on the United States through agents of influence. And this is quite logical. In the first most difficult months of the war, the allied participation of the United States in the war against Germany was extremely important for the Soviet Union.

However, life itself soon changed the priorities of Zarubin's work. Our residency in America was actively involved in the development of the "atomic project". In September 1941, the British accepted their

uranium bomb project. The project was expected to be completed in just two years. The UK Chiefs of Staff Committee has decided to build a plant to create "heavy duty weapons". Heifetz, our resident in San Francisco, whose main efforts were aimed at neutralizing the activities of the leaders of white emigration in America, suddenly

announced that the US government was attracting the most prominent scientists, Nobel Prize winners, to create a uranium bomb. Moreover, the famous physicist Oppenheimer, who sympathizes with the ideas of the US Communist Party, moves to a new, secret laboratory, where he will work on these weapons.

At the same time, Heifetz, who personally met Oppenheimer, conveyed in one of his radiograms the essence of Einstein's letter to the President of the United States, in which the great scientist, concerned about the threat of fascism, urges Roosevelt to start building an atomic bomb. Information on the superweapon was also of

interest to our scientists.

Today, a letter dated May is well known.

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1942, sent to Stalin by a physicist, future academician Flerov. In it, he shared his observations that before the war, publications on the uranium problem disappeared from the open foreign press and scientific journals. The "classification" of the problem could only speak of the beginning of work on the creation of nuclear weapons. In unraveling the secrets of the atomic superweapon, they took

participation not only agents of the reconnaissance and sabotage service in the USA, England, Scandinavia, but also our partisans. In fact, sometimes you don't even know it. Here is one, in its own way,

unique case. Colonel Ilya Starinov recalls this as follows: "The group of foreman Maxim Alekseevich Repin captured and delivered to the headquarters of the special battalion a large number of various enemy documents, in particular a thick common notebook of a German officer who died in battle from engineering units. The notebook was dotted with graphs and formulas, accompanied by explanations.

Not knowing German, I gave the notebook to read to one from the officers. He did not find anything interesting in it:

— All some kind of synthetics, Comrade Colonel. Ordinary Fritz "ersatz". Yes, even nonsense about atomic energy ...

But I didn't throw the notebook away. You never know! And there will be no place." Soon

Starinov brought and handed over the notebook to our scientists in Moscow. "Only

many years later," he would write later, "I learned that the entries in the notebook obtained on Krivoy Kos by foreman Repin were regarded as evidence of the work that had begun in Nazi Germany on the use of atomic energy for military purposes, especially since Hitler had already threatened humanity with some sort of "top-secret weapon"...

In a word, the notebook I brought to Moscow turned out to be an important document for scientists. The journal "Chemistry and Life" published excerpts from the memoirs of S.V. Kaftanov. Sergei Vasilyevich writes that this notebook, along with Flerov's warning, prompted him and Academician A.F. Ioffe to apply to the State Defense Committee with a letter about the need to create a scientific center on nuclear weapons problems. Like this, far from scientific centers; at the front, in battle, another

important confirmation of the idea of the need to create their own nuclear weapons was found.

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It only remains to add that our intelligence officer in London, Barkovsky, handed over valuable material: the secret scientific developments of Western scientists on the atomic program. After familiarizing themselves with them, experts made a disappointing conclusion: Western science has advanced quite far along the path of creating nuclear weapons.

Fortunately, Stalin understood this too. And so the beginning of 1943 was marked by the issuance of a government decree on the organization of work on the use of atomic energy for military purposes, and soon the creation of a special laboratory of the USSR Academy of Sciences. At that time, the little-known young

scientist Kurchatov headed this laboratory. From the Politburo, the atomic project was first led by Molotov, then by Beria. Department "C" was created in the NKVD, which coordinated the activities of the country's intelligence agencies on "problem No. 1".

Intelligence helped our scientists in every possible way in their work on

atomic project. Today, Kurchatov's letters to the Council of People's Commissars are known.

"Now we have important guidelines for subsequent scientific research," the scientist reported, "they make it possible to solve the whole problem in a much shorter time ..." Pavel Sudoplatov, who headed Department "C", gives the figures: our agents in England

and the USA 286 secret scientific documents and publications. Kurchatov himself "in March April 1943 ... named the 7 most important scientific centers and 26 specialists in the United States, obtaining information from which was of great importance. From the point of view of intelligence activities, this meant the operational development of American scientists as sources of important information. What are these

sources? They were scientists from the Los Alamos and Berkeley laboratories, from the Oak Ridge plant. Among them are world names, the greatest physicists of our time - Einstein, Oppenheimer,

Fermi, Szilard. I want to make a reservation right away, and the head of our scientific and technical intelligence Kvasnikov, and the head of department "C" Sudoplatov in their memoirs unanimously declare: scientists, in one way or another connected

with Soviet intelligence, should be called our agents

it is forbidden.

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Most likely, it was a deep awareness of responsibility to the peoples of the Earth, a desire to resist fascism, an awareness of the danger of concentrating super-powerful weapons in one hand. Relatives and close circle of scientists are another matter.

So, our intelligence officers knew that Oppenheimer's wife Katherine was passionate about communist ideas and sympathized with the Soviet Union, which was fighting fascism. Kheifets introduces the famous Soviet intelligence officer Elizaveta Zarubina to Katherine.

I must say that Zarubina was an outstanding personality. A charming woman, smart, beautiful, well educated, spoke several languages, including English, German, French. In addition, she is an experienced illegal intelligence agent, she began her service in the Cheka together with Dzerzhinsky, and worked in Western Europe. By the time Zarubina was connected to the "atomic project", she was behind the "development" and recruitment of the most valuable agent - the Gestapo Leman. Zarubina quickly converges with Katherine. Soon Oppenheimer shares information with scientists of anti-fascist views who fled from Nazi

persecution. This is just one example of the successful work of Soviet intelligence. Of course, one cannot but recall Lona and Maurice Coen, our permanent couriers. It was Lona who handed

over the most important documents on the design of the atomic bomb.

The Cohens worked abroad for a long time after the war, in London, side by side with the KGB resident Conan the Young. Together

with him were arrested, thrown into jail. In six years they will be exchanged and they will stay in Moscow.

The spouses Julius and Ethel Rosenberg actively helped the Soviet Union in the "development of the atomic project", the Russian physicist Georgy Gamow, who left the USSR in the 30s, and the nuclear scientist Elizaveta Meitner, who fled Nazi Germany.

By the way, it was Meitner who persuaded Niels Bohr to share atomic secrets with anti-fascists. Now, fortunately, L. Beria's top secret note to Stalin, dated November 1945, has been revealed. In it, the chief of the Soviet special services reports.

"The well-known physicist, Professor Niels, works in Copenhagen, having returned from his relation to the US By the creation of the atomic bomb, is back from

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Denmark joined. Theoretical physicist To work in his institute V Niels Bohr is known as a progressive V Copenhagen. scientist And

a staunch supporter of the international exchange of scientific achievements. Leaving Denmark, under the guise of searching for the equipment of Soviet Scientific Institute, which was taken away by the Germans, a group of workers to establish information about it V

contact with Niels Bohr And received from By

the problem of the atomic bomb. Sent comrades: Colonel Vasilevsky, candidate in Physics and Mathematics Terletsky translator engineer Arutyunov, having found appropriate approaches, contacted Bohr and organized two meetings with him ... Comrade. Terletsky told Bor that, while passing through Copenhagen, he considered it his duty to pay a And

visit to the famous scientist at Moscow University. In the course of the conversation, Bohr was asked V a number of questions, previously in Moscow by Academician Kurchatov, by other scientists dealing with this problem. Bora, And What O Bohr's lectures are still warmly remembered V as well as an assessment of these answers

given by academician Kurchatov, is attached. I think Niels Bohr guess so specific questions. trained V And

List of questions, answers on

Not was such a naive person that what purpose these "visiting" Not With Russians ask him AND topics Not less He answered on them."

Speaking about the participation of the intelligence service in the "atomic project", one cannot but say separately about the special role of the talented intelligence officer Semenov in this matter. He, while still a young man, came to intelligence when the first wave of

repression subsided. By that time, Semenov had received a good engineering education. This is what intelligence leaders decided to take advantage of. With a long-range view, he is sent to study in the USA, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. Later, Semenov works "under the roof" of the Soviet foreign trade organization Amtorg. He goes out to

several promising physicists close to Oppenheimer, convinced anti-fascists. Thus, a channel is being created through which Moscow will receive secret information of a scientific and technical nature related to the construction of a nuclear bomb, nuclear reactors, uranium boilers, installations.

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Semenov's success was based on a deep knowledge of the subject, a real assessment of the situation, and the use of institute connections to determine the circle of American scientists participating in the Manhattan Project. Moscow received a

description of the design of the first American atomic bomb in early 1945. The war was coming to an end, and nuclear scientists were thinking about uranium ore. At that time, these reserves had not yet been explored in the Soviet Union, but they managed to intercept German materials in which the Nazis turned their eyes to the Rhodope Mountains in Bulgaria.

Dimitrov gave the go-ahead for the development of a uranium mine. The Bukhovo area was cordoned off by a ring of Soviet troops. In 1946, the Soviet Union will open its own uranium field, but production at Bukhovo will continue.

And although Stalin was constantly informed about the successful progress of work in the USA, the atomic bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki spurred the "leader of the peoples." An emergency meeting of the Politburo and the GKO was held, as a result of which a Special Committee and the Atomic Bomb Technical Council (AB) were created.

The special committee was headed by Beria, Pervukhin became his deputy, members were Malenkov, Voznesensky, People's Commissar of Ammunition Vannikov, Academicians Kapitsa and Kurchatov, Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs Zavenyagin. It was still four years before

our first atomic bomb was tested. Four years of hard, exhausting work of scientists, engineers, military specialists, intelligence officers.

The Special Committee is a special page in our history of the creation of Soviet nuclear weapons. Here, as a rule, keep quiet. Well, they say, to speak, the deed is done. Yes, what a great thing! The atomic bomb has been created. Or recognize Beria's great organizational talent. True, there is another opinion - a very authoritative one.

Opinion of a prominent scientist, member of the Special Committee, Academician Petr Leonidovich Kapitsa. They say that Kapitsa competed with Kurchatov and was seriously offended, as he claimed an independent and leading position in the implementation of the atomic project. Hence the discord with Beria.

Perhaps this is so. Even great people are still people with their shortcomings. But it seems to me that the matter is not in the academician's personal grievances. In his letters to Stalin, Kapitsa

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talks about something completely different. Alas, the scientist was never understood by the "leaders".

"Comrade Stalin! - Kapitsa wrote in November 1945 - For almost four months I have been sitting and actively participating in the work of the Special Committee and the Technical Council on Atomic

bomb (AB) ...

In the organization for AB, it seems to me, there is a lot of abnormality. In any case, what is being done now is not the shortest and cheapest way to create it...

The correct organization of all these issues is possible only under one condition, which does not exist, but without creating it, we will not solve the problems of AB quickly and generally on our own, perhaps we will not solve it at all. This condition is that more trust is needed between scientists and statesmen. This is our old history, remnants of the revolution. The war to a large extent smoothed out this abnormality, and if it remains now, it is only because the sense of respect for the scientist and science is not sufficiently cultivated.

True, the participation of scientists in the problems of our national economy and defense has always been great and important, but a scientist could help, remaining on the sidelines, with consultations and solving various tasks proposed to him. It should be noted that, unfortunately, this was due to the fact that our industry and weapons developed on the basis of improving existing designs. For example, Yakovlev, Tupolev, Lavochkin - the largest designers, but they still improved the existing type of aircraft. New types of aircraft, like turboprops, would require a different type of constructor, more creative and daring.

We have little space for such people in the Union. Therefore, equipment based on fundamentally new ideas, such as AB, V-2, radar, a gas turbine, etc., in our Union either weakly or does not move at all ...

Life has shown that I could force myself to obey only as Kapitsa - the head of the head office at the Council of People's Commissars, and not as Kapitsa - a world-famous scientist. Our cultural upbringing is still not enough to put Kapitsa the scientist higher than Kapitsa the boss... This is what happens now when solving problems of AB. The opinions of scientists are often taken with skepticism, and behind their backs they do it their own way. The Special Committee must teach the

comrades to trust the scientists, and scientists, in turn, this will make them feel more

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responsibility, but not yet. This can only be done if the scientists and the comrades of the Special Committee are equally responsible. And this is possible only when ... science and the scientist will be accepted by everyone as the main force, and not an auxiliary one, as it is now. Comrades Beria, Malenkov, Voznesensky behave in the Special Committee like

supermen. In particular Comrade. Beria. True, he has a conductor's baton in his hands. This is not bad, but after him the first violin should still be played by a scientist. After all, the violin sets the tone for the entire orchestra. Comrade Beria's main weakness is that the conductor must not only wave his baton, but also understand the score. With this, Beria is weak.

One has only to listen to the arguments about science of some comrades at the meetings of the Technical Council. They are often

to listen out of courtesy and hold back a smile, that's how they are naive.

They imagine that by knowing that two plus two equals four, they have already grasped all the depths of mathematics and can make authoritative judgments. Shortly after this

letter, Academician Kapitsa was removed from the Special Committee, and in 1946 he was removed from his post as head of the Glavkisloroda and director of the Institute for Physical Problems he founded.

Deprived of the institute, students, instruments and installations transferred to him by Rutherford, in a word, deprived of his favorite work, Pyotr Kapitsa fell ill for a long time. Beria persuaded Stalin to arrest the scientist, but "Koba" did not do this ...

Indeed, I did not just cite the letter of the scientist and briefly spoke about the consequences of his participation in the "atomic project". The tragedy lies in the fact that most of the intelligence officers to whom the country owes the creation of the shield shared the fate of Peter Kapitsa. Only they were not well-known scientists,

and therefore the Soviet resident in San Francisco, Kheifetz, was recalled from the United States and thrown into prison. Scouts Gorsky and Vasilevsky were dismissed from the bodies ahead of schedule. After the arrest of the Rozenbergs, Semyonov and Avakimyan were blamed for all the failures and expelled from intelligence without a pension or a livelihood. They did the same with the talented intelligence officers, the Zarubins. Now they were of no use to anyone. In August 1949

The Soviet Union tested its first atomic bomb.

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IN SIGHT - NATO HEADQUARTERS

It is generally accepted that the start of the Cold War was given by Winston Churchill in Fulton on March 6, 1946. This is wrong. The winds of that future "war" began to blow in the still blooming, happy victorious May of 1945. This was not felt or realized by the rank and file and officers of the various victorious armies, shaking hands on the Elbe, but there was a conflict of state interests. very palpable.

Soon one war followed another. The techniques and methods of struggle have changed, yesterday's partners in the anti-Hitler coalition have now become opponents, enemies.

Life set new challenges. The United States creates the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA). The USSR establishes its organ of renewed intelligence, the so-called Committee of Information.

The Committee included the 1st Directorate of the MGB and the Main Intelligence Directorate of the Ministry of Defense (GRU).

Headed the Molotov Committee. Later he was replaced for a short time by Vyshinsky, then by Zorin, later the representative of the USSR to the UN. The idea of

creating the Committee belonged to Molotov. The fact is that the vast experience accumulated during the war showed that political and military intelligence is not always skillful and

she skillfully coped with the analysis of intelligence information that flowed through various channels to the Center. The idea itself was

very sound, if the Committee of Information is considered as a single analytical brain of the country. However, Molotov and his henchmen looked at the Committee somewhat differently. It soon turned into an appendage of the Foreign Ministry, which, as you know, is in charge of diplomatic issues, but not intelligence. A few years later, Stalin realized the inefficiency of the work of the

Committee of Information and ordered a return to the previous, proven system - the 1st Main Directorate of the MGB (now the foreign intelligence service) and the GRU again took up operational intelligence. In the summer of 1946, as part of the reorganization of intelligence agencies, the 4th directorate of reconnaissance

and sabotage work was disbanded. A year later, instead of him, a special intelligence and sabotage service was created under the Ministry of

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state security. In 1950, the service was renamed Bureau No. 1 of the MGB for sabotage work abroad.

In the Information Committee, the head of the Department for Work with Illegals was an experienced intelligence agent Korotkov. It was he who was the author of the plan to send Rudolf Abel to the United States and Western Europe as a resident of Soviet intelligence. Abel's main

task was to activate our spy network in Norway, France, the United States and Canada. It was necessary to penetrate the military bases in Bergen, Le Havre, Cherbourg. The country's leadership demanded from intelligence an answer to a very painful question for the Soviet Union: how quickly and mobilely could the Americans act when transferring their forces and means to Europe in the event of a war? Abel not only managed to check the old sources of information, but also created a new agent network. It

included illegal immigrants who, under the legend of Czech emigrants, settled in Brazil, Mexico, and Argentina.

As a rule, they posed as businessmen, which gave them the opportunity to move freely from Latin America to the United States and back. Colonel Filonenko

successfully worked in the group of "Latin Americans". With his wife and three children, he lived between Argentina and Brazil as a Czech businessman who fled Shanghai from the communist dictatorship.

The Filonenkos had their agents among the Chinese, who, if necessary, could deliver explosives to American ships carrying cargo to Japan. Abel, of course, was a talented intelligence officer and therefore

could not rely on only one group of agents. In addition to Filonenko, German emigrants lived in the eastern United States, and in particular Kurt Wiesel. He went through the school of intelligence and sabotage under the guidance of

Ernst Wollweber, a well-known specialist in sabotage back in pre-war Europe.

Wiesel worked as a lead engineer at a shipyard and, of course, had access to classified information. Being an experienced intelligence officer, a sociable person, he gathered a group of reliable militants from sailors, dockers, shipbuilding workers who were ready at any moment to carry out acts of sabotage. 271

The threat of such acts arose in 1950, when the Korean War reached its climax. It was then that our demolition specialists were transferred from Latin America to the United States to help the militants Filonenko and Wiesel, who were ready to collect mines on the spot.

Fortunately, the Center did not dare to order the use of explosive devices. Specialist officers returned to the Soviet Union.

With the arrival of Ignatiev as Minister of State Security, Bureau No. 1 and the Main Intelligence Directorate began to develop a strategic plan for sabotage operations at American military bases in the event of a new war or local conflict near the borders of the USSR.

Several dozens of the most important targets were identified, and among them were the military bases of the strategic air forces with nuclear weapons; warehouses and terminals with ammunition and military equipment for American troops in Europe and the Far East; oil pipelines and storages of combustive-lubricating materials and fuel.

By that time, the Soviet intelligence and sabotage service had a network of agents in the United States and Canada, in Norway, Austria, France, Germany, who kept NATO strategic military facilities under constant surveillance and control. If necessary, our "Latin American" battle groups could be deployed across

the Mexican border to America. An experienced NKVD agent, Prince Gagarin, who served in Vlasov's army and posed as an ardent anti-Soviet, moved

from Germany to France. His main task was to create a base for the deployment of sabotage work to disable the communications and communications system of NATO headquarters, which at that time was located in the suburbs of Paris. The joint plan of reconnaissance and sabotage actions of the GRU and Bureau No. 1 was approved by two ministers - defense and state security. According to military historians, the

idea of developing a plan belonged to Beria or even Stalin himself. In the Kremlin, under the chairmanship of Beria,

extended meeting. It was attended by representatives

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Ministries of State Security, Military Intelligence, Navy, Air Force of the country.

Military intelligence was represented by General Zakharov, from the aviators was Marshal Golovanov, commander of long-range aviation, fleet

sent to the meeting already reinstated in the post of Commander-in-Chief of the Navy and the rank of the legendary Admiral Kuznetsov.

As it turned out, each of the military leaders had his own version of the strategic plan. Kuznetsov proposed in case of war to launch several preventive strikes and disable several US aircraft carriers. These strikes, according to the Commander-in-Chief of the Navy, could be reinforced by sabotage at the naval bases of Europe. Everyone agreed that a preemptive strike against enemy strategic targets

was a new word in the art of war, but the theory of this strike was not fully developed. There was still a lot to think about and calculate.

Long-range aviation had its own opinion on this matter. Agreeing with Admiral Kuznetsov about our limited resources, Marshal Golovanov declared that pre-emptive strikes should not be directed against ships, even such as aircraft carriers, but against airfields where American Air Force units capable of carrying nuclear weapons are based.

The scouts had their reasons. They believed that the experience of the last war clearly proved that sabotage operations on the rear supply and support routes of the enemy are more effective than direct strikes on military targets.

Yes, direct strikes are very effective, they demoralize the enemy for some time, but the real damage, as a rule, is small. After all, all strategic bases have good cover from the ground and from the air. As for sabotage operations, well-planned and carried out, they can cut off the enemy from supply bases for a long time.

The intelligence proposals seemed to Beria more convincing. Representatives of the Navy and aviation agreed with this.

But how do you go from idea to implementation? A tool was needed to enable the execution of this large-scale plan. The special purpose brigade, which had front-line experience in sabotage activities, had by that time been disbanded. To some extent, we have returned to the situation of 1941. Again in the country

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there was no well-trained combat formation to carry out sabotage behind enemy lines. Again, I had to start from scratch. At a

meeting with Beria, the head of military intelligence, General Zakharov, expressed a sound idea: all branches of the armed forces should have units for conducting sabotage operations. Today, for example, such units are available in the US Army. And then among the first who decided to recreate the brigade

special purpose, was Bureau No. 1.

Talking about this period, one cannot help but recall the flight of our reconnaissance aircraft, organized by the reconnaissance and sabotage service together with the country's Air Force.

The bomber took off from the runway of one of the

military airfields near Murmansk in May 1953 and passed along the northern tip of Norway, then Great Britain, approaching NATO strategic facilities at a bombing distance.

It was a real victory for Soviet intelligence. NATO air defense systems did not record the flight of the reconnaissance aircraft. But the fact is that in our hands there was a device ("friend or foe"), which was obtained by our agent at the headquarters of the alliance.

In addition to action plans directed against American and NATO strategic military bases, a wide deployment of an agent network, training of militants, intelligence and surveillance, the sabotage service carried out, fortunately, a bloodless operation to transfer power in Czechoslovakia from Edvard Beneš to Klement Gottwald. It happened in 1948. For many decades, the world knew nothing about this secret action.

This operation was carried out by the most experienced intelligence officer, our resident in Prague in the prewar years Zubov. In 1938,

Zubov, on the orders of Stalin and Molotov, was thrown into prison. He was tortured, beaten. Investigator Rhodes, whose name became notorious during the perestroika years, turned Zubov into an invalid. He limped, moved with a stick.

Stalin wanted one thing: the transfer of power from Beneš to Gottwald. This operation was originally entrusted to Sudoplatov, but he proposed Zubov's candidacy, mindful of his pre-war connections.

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In January 1948, Sudoplatov and Zubov left for Prague. In his memoirs, Pavel Sudoplatov writes about a special-purpose brigade of 400 people dressed in civilian clothes and transferred to Prague to support, if necessary, Gottwald. Studying the history of sabotage units, I became interested in the fate of this brigade, but I could not find any

broad information. What was this brigade? From whom was it formed, how did it end up on the territory of Czechoslovakia? After all, 400 people is a fairly large unit, and it is not easy to transfer it unnoticed to another state. In addition, if it really was, then this breaks the generally accepted version that in the USSR from 1946 to 1979 there were no reconnaissance and sabotage units of state security agencies. However, as I said, the question of the special brigade is still

to be clarified.

As for the task set by Stalin for intelligence, it was successfully completed. Zubov managed to get a face-to-face meeting with Benes at his residence in Prague. He conveyed to the President of Czechoslovakia, in fact, a Stalinist ultimatum, the main point of which was that the country would undergo fundamental changes, regardless of whether the current leadership was retained or not. However, according to Stalin, only Benes could provide

a peaceful transition of power.

It should be given credit, Benes did everything to avoid unrest in the country, and ceded the post of head of state to Klement Gottwald.

This is the result of the Prague action of the reconnaissance and sabotage service.

Unfortunately, not all operations ended so peacefully and bloodlessly. More often, the motto of the great proletarian writer M. Gorky was put at the forefront of politics: "If the enemy does not surrender, he is destroyed."

It is hardly destined now for anyone to find out when the idea of destroying Marshal Tito was born in Stalin's inflamed brain. But she was born, and shortly before his death, Stalin gathered in the Kremlin several Chekist leaders, headed by Minister of State Security Ignatiev. The commission of the act was assigned to the reconnaissance and sabotage service and, first of all, to the illegal agent Gri

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gulevich. Such was the initiative of the then Minister of State Security and his deputies. Grigulevich, no doubt, was an

experienced intelligence officer. Suffice it to say that he managed to become the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Costa Rica to Italy and Yugoslavia. The permanent residence of the ambassador was in Rome, but from time to time

Grigulevich visited Yugoslavia on diplomatic business. He was well received, he managed to establish good relations with influential people close to Tito. Actually, this decided the fate of the operation.

The new leaders of the ministry, knowing Stalin's hatred for Tito, seized on Grigulevich as a lifesaver. Of course, no one was interested in the fact that Grigulevich, despite his rich experience in undercover work, was never used as a militant. He participated in the assassination attempt on Trotsky, in some other actions, but he was the "brain of the operation",

and not a militant performer. In addition, the very development of the assassination attempt on Tito seemed to be very weak in operational terms.

Most importantly, the agent's departure after the act of sabotage was not practiced. Grigulevich was going to be sent to a clear death, and this was in the peaceful year of 1952. The options presented to Stalin were as follows. Murder Tito to produce from a silent device, disguised as a personal item. Do it at a diplomatic reception in London, where

Tito was going on an official visit, or directly in Belgrade.

However, even a person who is not privy to the intricacies of diplomacy knows that a reception with the participation of heads of state is carefully guarded, and besides, there are always many guests, which clearly makes it difficult to implement such a plan, and even more so to leave

agent.

What was proposed to cover the agent in this case? Together with the shot, the use of tear gas. Today, we are more familiar with tear gases, even at the household level, and we know how ineffective they are.

Second option. During a personal audience with Tito, using a disguised apparatus, throw a dose of pneumonic plague bacteria into the air and infect the Yugoslav leader and all those present. Grigulevich was supposed to be vaccinated against the plague first. 276

And finally, the third option is to give Tito a gift in the form of a jewelry box, which, when opened, releases a poisonous substance. All three options were extremely risky, with a touch of adventurism

and unprofessionalism. It is difficult to say how this so-called operation to eliminate Tito would have ended. But fate

wanted it not to take place, and Marshal Tito lived for many more years.

In March 1953, Stalin died before he could carry out his next sinister plan. The political situation in the ruling elites of the Soviet state changed dramatically, and no one remembered the liquidation of Tito.

"IF THE ENEMY DOES NOT SURRENDER..."

The war had not yet ended, and Stalin was faced with the problem of nationalist movements in the Baltic states, in the Western lands of Ukraine and Belarus.

The fight against the "forest brothers", Bandera and other armed formations was carried out mainly by local security agencies.

However, the Center tightly controlled the situation, helping the local Chekists in every possible way with weapons, experienced personnel of operatives and militants. As for the top of the bandit armed formations, the leaders of the nationalist movements, Moscow was directly involved in them. By the way, the best specialists in the Ukrainian and Baltic regions were selected. Here, for the first time in the post-war period, preparations from a secret technical laboratory,

headed by Mairanovsky, are used. A few years ago, the disclosure of the secrets of the "secret laboratory" made a lot of noise in the country, however, it seems that the

affairs of this sinister institution are still far known.

Not all.

But what is known only confirms the idea: the post-war struggle against the leaders of the nationalist movement fits into the framework of the traditional Stalinist policy, the essence of which is still the same: if the enemy does not surrender...

There is no doubt that the methods by which Stalin fought his opponents were criminal. This must never be forgotten.

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However, the leaders of the Ukrainian and Baltic nationalists should not be presented as purely political figures. Behind each of them were armed gangs. During the period of German occupation, members of these gangs actively collaborated with the Nazis, fought as part of punitive formations, such as, for example, the infamous SS division "Galicia" or a battalion

"Nichtigal".

The same Shukhevych, the right hand of Bandera, who coordinated the armed resistance in Ukraine from 1943 to 1950, had the rank of Hauptsturmführer and was one of the leaders of the Nichtigal battalion.

And the Metropolitan of the Uniate Church Andrey Sheptytsky himself, a former officer of the Austrian army, was at one time involved in a rather scandalous story. He was arrested by the tsarist counterintelligence, and Sheptytsky ended up in exile. He returned to Lviv only in 1917, released by the Provisional Government. What was Count Sheptytsky accused of? In cooperation with

Austrian intelligence. The war revealed the true essence of the leader of the Uniates. No sooner had

the first boot of a German soldier stepped on the paving stones of Lvov streets than Sheptytsky sent a congratulation to Hitler, in which he enthusiastically welcomed the arrival of the Nazis.

In 1943, the metropolitan blessed the newly created SS division "Galicia". The division, as you know,

swore allegiance to Hitler and was thrown into the destruction of partisans, civilians, Jews. The regiments of this division marched "with fire and sword" through the cities and villages of Ukraine, Slovakia, Yugoslavia. Incidentally, the chaplain in the Galicia division was none

other than Sheptytsky's spiritual disciple, Archbishop Iosif Sipliy. It was he who blessed the punishers for bloody deeds.

However, Sipliy was not afraid to come to Moscow as part of the delegation of the Uniate Church, sent by order of Sheptytsky. By that time, the NKVD already had accurate information about the connection between the leadership of the Uniates and the Nazis, which was announced to the delegation.

True, Sipliy was arrested later, after the war. The terrorist underground of Ukrainian nationalists was very active. Bandera not only forbade young people to go to the Red Army, they killed and burned the families of those

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who fought the Nazis, but also decided on quite high-profile cases. Take, for example, the murder of Archbishop G. Kostelnik on the steps of the Lviv Cathedral or the terrorist act against the famous Ukrainian writer Yaroslav Galan. I remember that in the first days of my studies at the

Lviv Higher Military-Political School, I managed to visit the museum-apartment of Yaroslav Galan. Growing up in the Russian outback and, really, not suspecting what nationalism is,

I saw here the true face of this wild phenomenon.

Photos of the slaughtered writer, manuscripts stained with blood, struck with their savagery. I couldn't believe that this happened only twenty-four years ago. But how naive I was. The Middle Ages, implicated

in bloody nationalism, is able to return, it would seem, from a distant non-existence. I won't say whether there is Galana Street in Lviv now, but I know for sure that Bandera Street exists. A classmate at a military school once called: "Congratulate me, now I live on Bandera Street. In the most terrible dream, this could not have been dreamed of ... "

No, this is not a dream. Fascism is cursed throughout the world, and in fraternal Ukraine, the memory of Hitler's henchman has been perpetuated.

What is this? This is nationalism. He has no mind. He only has hatred. He is blind and insane. It was these madmen who raised their hands against the publicist Yaroslav Galan in 1949. Galan became a bone in the throat of Ukrainian nationalists, and the hired killer did his job.

So it is not worth representing militant nationalists, terrorists as such silent victims of the inhuman Stalinist regime. I must say frankly, the rivals were worthy of each other.

On the one hand, bloody crimes, service in the fascist units of the SS, subversive gang activity, on the other hand, reprisals without trial or investigation. Mairanovsky, head of the secret toxicological

laboratory of the MGB, gave a fatal injection to one of the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists, Shumsky. The poison worked flawlessly. It was announced to the public that Shumsky died of heart failure.

Who knows how his fate would have turned out, if not for the daring, with threatening letter he sent to Stalin. Noise

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Skysky, who was at that time in exile in Saratov, demanded to return him to his homeland, threatened to commit suicide. Stalin did not forgive this. Moreover, the NKVD became aware of Shumsky's connections with Ukrainian emigrants abroad and the nationalist underground in Ukraine. The Archbishop of the Uniate Church Romzha also ended his life. There is a

version that the initiator of his murder was Nikita Khrushchev, at that time the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He turned to Stalin with an urgent request: to destroy the terrorist nest of the Vatican in Uzhgorod. Stalin gave the go-ahead. Local security agencies arranged a car accident for Romzha, as a result of which the archbishop was only injured, but not killed.

Mairanovsky left for Uzhgorod. He handed over the vial of poison to an MGB agent, a nurse at the hospital where Romzha was being treated. She made an

injection. The terrorist act against Yaroslav Galan received a special response in Ukraine and Moscow. Stalin was beside himself. A whole group of Chekists headed by a deputy flew to Lvov

Minister of State Security, Lieutenant General Selivanovskiy. They were faced with the task of finding and destroying the leaders of the Bandera underground. The first on this list was

Hauptsturmführer Shukhevych,
Bandera's right hand.

He had an extensive, deeply conspiratorial network of agents. Shukhevych himself is certainly an extraordinary person, highly authoritative in nationalist circles. He is smart and brave, has extensive experience in conspiratorial work.

Suffice it to say that at the time when Selivanovskiy's group was already working in Lvov and all the local security officers were raised to their feet, Shukhevych takes a rather daring step - he sends a wreath to the funeral of his acquaintance, a well-known theater figure in Western Ukraine. The mourning ribbon bears the name of Shukhevych.

However, agents of the reconnaissance and sabotage service have already followed in his

footsteps. First, a well-known lawyer in Lvov, a member of the Bandera movement Grobovoy, and then academician Krypyakevich repent of their views and declare this openly. Chekists go to Shukhevych, a football player of the team

"Dynamo". Bandera's henchman starts to get nervous:

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he kills a policeman who, without suspecting anything, enters the house where Shukhevych is staying.

Again, for some time, the seasoned bandit disappears, but soon the task force "covers" him in one of the villages near Lvov. Shooting back, Shukhevych dies.

With the departure of the leader, the OUN movement fades away. At the same time, the Bandera ringleaders in Germany and England did not those who knew about Shukhevych's death were alarmed by his silence.

Finally, they decide to send a group of saboteurs to Ukraine, led by an experienced and prudent militant, the head of the security service of the OUN Matviyko. He must contact Shukhevych and give a second wind to the insurgency.

The reconnaissance and sabotage service learns about this plan in time. An MGB agent sent to one of the Bandera detachments reports the route of the Matviyko group and the proposed place of its landing. Indeed, soon a British plane invaded the airspace of the Soviet

Union. The anti-aircraft defenses, which had been warned in advance, were silent. In the Rivne region, a group of paratroopers was landed from the aircraft.

Matviyko and his militants were warmly welcomed by OUN underground workers at a safe house. Soviet counterintelligence officers skillfully played the role of underground workers. Soon the head of

the OUN security service was in Moscow for interrogation. They were personally dealt with by the minister, his deputies or the head of the intelligence and sabotage service of the MGB.

It was already the sixth year of the armed struggle in Ukraine. Stalin, the leadership of the country, the state security agencies wanted to end this struggle as soon as possible. No measures of physical coercion were applied to Matvieyko. They tried, if not to convert him, then at least to convince him, to force him to turn to OUN members inside the country and abroad with a call for reconciliation. Matvieyko was allowed to listen to the radio, the Chekists visited

the theater with him. Moreover, the most suitable time was chosen for such a "cult trip": a decade of Ukrainian art was going on in Moscow. And the former ardent OUN member listened to opera singing in his native language with undisguised pleasure. This made an indelible impression on him. 281

During the interrogations, Matvieyko became convinced that the Soviet intelligence kept the Bandera movement "under the hood": he was named the leaders of the Ukrainian nationalists, told about their life, views, addictions.

After Moscow, Matvieyko was sent to Kyiv, then to Lvov. Being an experienced operative, the head of the OUN security service escaped from custody. His escape became a real emergency

for the Center. However, the Chekists did not have time to really expand the search, as Matvieyko himself surrendered to the security agencies. "Agitprop" of Soviet intelligence officers was not in vain. During several days of escape, the OUN

member visited the most secret appearances and realized: the addresses were incorrect, the agents were fictitious. By and large, that wide agent network, which was confidently reported to the London headquarters of the OUN, did not exist. He realized the futility of his efforts. At a press conference arranged for this occasion, the former head of the security service condemned the Bandera

movement and refused to continue the struggle, calling on his former comrades-in-arms to do so. He stayed at home, lived peacefully, worked, raised children. So, in fact, ended the Bandera movement. Although it can hardly be argued today that the completion is final. There was the same as a Phoenix bird,

Bandera street. Who knows where it will lead? Just not to forget that we passed through it once.

There are similar streets in the Baltic States. Former "forest brothers" are confidently marching along them. They are now equal in rights and benefits with those who fought against fascism. They say they fought for the freedom of their republics, even if they stood side by side with the Nazis. A startling

statement. And I would like to immediately dot the "i". Today, one thing is for certain clear: although the nationalist movements of Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia put forward independent slogans and preached supposedly independent goals of achieving independence, they never were

independent. These were police formations created by the fascists, with fascist weapons, with fascist money. And, of course, pro-German oriented, they are always 282

regarded as residual centers of fascist resistance. An important role in the defeat of the

nationalist movement in the Baltic States was played by the Hero of the Soviet Union, an experienced Lithuanian intelligence officer Vaupshasov. This most difficult problem was solved not with the help of mass migrations and not by conducting army operations, but by undercover penetration into enemy gangs. It should be noted that today's historians, as a rule, miss one important

detail: the post-war struggle against nationalist gangs was extremely tense and bloody.

According to the most conservative estimates, over 50 thousand Soviet party activists, Chekists, soldiers of the internal troops, "fighters" died in this struggle. These sacrifices are enormous for the small population of the Baltic republics.

After the defeat of the Nazis and the end of the war, the bandit formations of the Baltic states enjoyed the support of the British special services.

Our sabotage service, through its foreign intelligence agents, knew about the channels of communication between the British and the nationalist underground.

On this, in fact, it was possible to play. As representatives of British intelligence, experienced Chekists were sent - Lithuanians and Latvians who had gone through the school of guerrilla warfare. And this predetermined the success of the operation, during which it was possible to neutralize the leaders of the insurgent movement.

The liquidation of the leaders of bandit formations sharply reduced the activity of hostilities. In the post-war period,

the leadership of the Soviet Union and its intelligence had another problem, which is rarely mentioned even by researchers of that period. We are talking about the Kurdish detachments under the leadership of Mustafa Barzani, who, having broken through the blockade of the Shah's troops of Iran, crossed into the territory of Soviet Azerbaijan. Stalin knew that the Kurds were constantly

in conflict with either the Persians or the Iraqis. They also opposed the British, and Russia repeatedly supported them. This time, Stalin promised Barzani's support and even

agreed to train Kurdish officials in our military schools

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ceres. A large-scale political game was conceived, in which the main role was assigned to the Kurds.

Moscow hoped with the help of Barzani to change the pro-British regime in Iraq, which, in fact, happened in 1958. However, the irony of fate was that instead of the government of Nuri Said, overthrown in a military coup, our former allies came to power in Baghdad.

Iraq, Syria, and later Egypt began to play a dominant role in the foreign policy relations of the Soviet Union. The Kurds were pushed into the shadows. Later, in the early 60s, we again helped the Kurds

resist the punitive operations of the Iraqi army.

However, times change a lot. Today we are somehow not up to the Kurds and their problems. In the south, Chechnya flared up again - the eternal pain of Russia.

"ICE" IN KHRUSHCHEV'S "THAW"

In the summer of 1953, Lavrenty Beria was arrested by Marshal Zhukov and several other generals right at a meeting of the Presidium of the Party Central Committee. He was

kept in the basement of the headquarters of the Moscow military district and was soon executed. Following him, many officers and generals of the NKVD were arrested, who were under his leadership, carried out his instructions. Arrests also

took place in the reconnaissance and sabotage service. Sudoplatov, Eitingon, Serebryansky ended up in prison. The spouses of Zarubina and Vasilevsky were transferred to the reserve. Scout Semyonov, who made an invaluable contribution to the so-called "atomic business", found himself without a job and a pension. Zoya Rybkina was also fired from intelligence, sending her for further service to the north, to the system of the Ministry of Internal Affairs.

A new era has come in the history of intelligence sabotage service.

The department still remained, and with the transformation of the Ministry of State Security into the KGB in 1954, it was renamed the 13th department of the First Main Directorate. The direction of the work of the department remained the same. Despite all the political changes of the "thaw",

reconnaissance and sabotage service received another

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dacha: liquidate the head of the Russian nationalist organization NTS G. Okolovich. NTS actively cooperated with the Nazis during the war years. The operation was entrusted to an

experienced intelligence officer, saboteur Hero of the Soviet Union Mirkovsky. He attracted an illegal immigrant N. Khokhlov from the reserve of the Ministry of State Security.

Before the war, Khokhlov worked among the intelligentsia. Very educated, with a pleasant appearance, he had undoubted artistic abilities. At one time he performed on the stage and, I must say, very successfully. He was known as a master of artistic whistling. By the way, hence his undercover nickname "Whistler". In 1943, it was used in Minsk, in preparation for the assassination of Gauleiter Kube. There he acted as a

German officer. After the war, Khokhlov, aka Hofbauer, traveled several times to Europe: to Germany, Switzerland, Austria. On one of his trips, he was detained

by customs officers. "Whistler"

illegally tried to take out an accordion bought in another country. The scout made an unforgivable mistake, in the language of illegal immigrants this is called "flare". The customs officers carefully checked the documents, the passport, in a word, Khokhlov was among the suspicious persons.

It is difficult to say why the leadership of the department, the experienced Mirkovsky, violated the laws of conspiracy and nevertheless decided to use Khokhlov in the case? And, as time has shown, cruelly for it paid off.

There are two versions of Khokhlov's escape to the West. The one he describes in his book, subsequently published in the United States, and the version of the employees and chiefs of Soviet intelligence who worked with him. Mirkovsky and other

intelligence officers believed that Khokhlov was seized by US intelligence agents with a "lighted" passport and forced to cooperate with the CIA. This conclusion was based on the fact that "Svistun" did not want to go on a business trip. He did not take his wife and son with him to Austria, although such a possibility existed for cover purposes. It only meant that Khokhlov was not going to run away. However, Whistler said something completely different at a press conference organized

by the CIA. He said that Jan's wife,

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a boko religious woman, dissuaded him from killing Okolovich. Together they had been planning to flee abroad for a long time, and now Khokhlov demands that his wife and son go to the West.

The press conference and the published book caused a lot of noise, Khokhlov was widely used by Western intelligence agencies in anti-Soviet propaganda.

Despite the wide exposure of Beria and his staff and the onset of a "thaw" in the life of the country, Nikita Khrushchev dealt with his political opponents with the same Stalinist methods. His "non-healing wound" remained Ukrainian nationalists. They spoiled a lot of Khrushchev's blood when he was the first secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Ukraine. He still remembered the anger of the "master" after the murder of Yaroslav Galan. The inability of the head of the republic to curb the Bandera people could cost him his head. Now the situation was different: the gangs had been liquidated, but abroad, under the wing of the Western

intelligence services, organizations of nationalists led by Bandera and his right-hand man Lev Rebet "nested".

According to all reports, Rebet, a younger, enterprising one, was gaining authority, pushing the aging Bandera into the shadows. And then the first blow was dealt precisely to Rebet. In October 1957, Soviet

intelligence agent Bogdan Stashinsky liquidated Lev Rebet. Two years later, the turn came to Bandera.

The murder of Bandera was practically the last political assassination, which was directly involved in the reconnaissance and sabotage service of the Soviet Union.

With the coming to power of General Secretary L. Brezhnev and Chairman of the Council of Ministers A. Kosygin, the practice of political assassinations, as such, was actually stopped. We can recall only a few cases, such as the death of a Bulgarian dissident from a poisoned microbullet. The Soviet secret services were also involved in this, but only indirectly. The operation itself was prepared and carried out by Bulgarian agents, although at the request of the Bulgarians we provided them with a "shooting umbrella". True, V. Solovyov and E. Klepikova in their book "Conspirators in the Kremlin" argue that "A quarter of a century after Stalin's death, Andropov restored the practice of poly

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tic murders disguised as a gang attack, a car accident or suicide. The disguise, however, is so transparent that no one is left in doubt whose work it really is. But the KGB does not leave any direct traces: not caught - not a thief. Like this. And then the authors say that Andropov transferred the practice of political assassinations from the internal "platform" to the world.

An example is the assassination attempt on the Pope. Here Andropov's ardent accusers testify that the KGB chairman "had a misfire."

The accusation, of course, is monstrous. But unproven. Paraphrasing the authors, I would like to say: "Their disguise is so transparent that no one has any doubts - such a statement is another slander."

As one honored general of the KGB told me: "There was everything in the history of our sabotage service, but to hang the Pope on it too ... This is too much."

Indeed, Ali Agca, who shot at the head of the Catholic Church, Pope John Paul II, was, as you know, a terrorist killer who professionally committed many homeland, Turkey. hired bloody crimes in his According to Turkish police, Ali Agca is a militant of a far-right organization - the

Nationalist Movement Party and its youth wing, which calls itself the Gray Wolves.

This party links up with the neo-fascist Black International, which, in turn, through its emigrants abroad, maintains links with the extreme right around the world. The "Grey Wolves" are establishing contacts with extremists from the Italian "Ordine

Nuovo", with the nationalists of FANE - the French Federation of National and European Actions (by the way, banned in their country), with the West German Nazis.

So where do the traces of the killer lead - to Germany, France, Italy, or maybe Turkey? This has not been proven. Terrorist Ali Agca stated: "I acted alone and carried out my action in protest against American and Soviet imperialism."

However, what did the most secret 13th department do when his "registry" ceased to appear political assassinations?
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"We have always had enough work," Major General Alexander Lazarenko, former deputy head of the 13th department, once said at a meeting. - One of the areas that I, by the way, supervised, was called technical, the rest - undercover. Undercover work was carried out by the first, American

direction. His boss in Africa was captured by the CIA.

The second direction is West German, the third is African. Another direction of special operations and technical, as I said. What weapons did we make! Special silent

pistol. The Americans never dreamed of such a pistol, but we already shot it. No, this is not a Makarov pistol with a silencer. This is a masterpiece of science

and technology: lethality, like Makarov, and absolute noiselessness. When I showed it to the GRU, everyone there clutched their heads in surprise. For it, I was awarded the State Prize

of the USSR in the field of science and special equipment.

And the mine... We gave it a musical name. It uses a completely new operating principle: a ball contactor. There are no such mines, except for ours, in the world. Fits in your pocket.

As for the undercover work, everything was up to the mark. Recently I read: Lyalin was ordered to be killed, but the order was not carried out. Yes, we knew every step of the traitor. The hospital where his wife gave birth. Were we ready to carry out the order? Ready. But there was no such order. Although our comrades, betrayed by Lyalin, were rotting in prison. But besides the Lyalins, Gordievskys and other traitors, there were

also terrorists, the father and son of Brazinskasy, who brutally murdered the flight attendant Nadya Kurchenko. This bloody crime shook the country.

We knew that Turkey would not extradite the terrorists, and therefore we were preparing an operation to eliminate

them. Our agents followed every step of the bandits. The Brazinskas, or, as they called them, "pirates", lived in a villa near Istanbul and went everywhere only together.

An agent was trained, who lived in a Middle Eastern country, who came to Moscow. Here he trained, our employees made for him special 288

boots, in the sole of which a firing device was mounted. It was only important to hit the terrorist with a microbullet, and this wound would have been fatal. Kurchenko's killers did not often leave the villa, but still from

time to time they visited the local bazaar. There, it was decided to carry out an operation to destroy it. However, the act of retribution did not take place. The terrorists hastily left Turkey. I think they

assisted by US intelligence agencies. Two people in our world is like a needle in a haystack. But we managed to trace their path a little later. From Istanbul they fled to Spain.

If the Brazinskas had stayed in Spain, we would have had them there too. got it, but they fled to Venezuela, then to the USA.

The 13th Department, and later, after the escape of Lyalin, Department "B" had a special purpose brigade subordinate to it. True, it existed only on paper in accordance with the mob plan and was deployed in case of war. The regiments of the brigade were in Leningrad, Kyiv, Krasnodar, Tashkent, Alma-Ata, the Far East and Moscow. In

the regiments "live" were the commander, chief of staff, chief of communications and several , other people in the "servants". That's the whole regiment.

In fairness, it must be said that sometimes the regiments were deployed to the full state, calling for "reserves". Just what kind of saboteurs were they? So, for the sake of calming your own conscience.

The department of reconnaissance and sabotage work closed the so-called advanced training courses for officers - the legendary KUOS. In fact, all the operatives of both central and local KGB bodies went through these courses. When in 1979 a rather unexpected task was set to conduct a large-scale special operation in Kabul, it was the "Kuosovites" that became the basis of the special forces.

Postgraduate courses were founded in 1966. The impetus for their formation, according to the first commander of the KUOS, retired colonel Khariton Bolotov, was the Berlin and Hungarian events. There was a shortage of experienced intelligence officers with sabotage training.

And indeed, where could I deeply master intelligence sabotage, mine-explosive training even employees 289

a nickname with a higher education, a graduate of the operational faculty? It would seem that elementary knowledge of working with a map, orienteering in the forest, at night, but where to fix them? Fixed on KUOS.

Refresher courses were a kind of response to the creation of Green Beret units in the United States. After all, the KGB knew perfectly well that General M. Taylor, on the eve of the events in Cuban Cochinos, proposed the creation of "counter-partisan units."

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And they were created. The Pentagon spared no expense for the newly formed units. The number of "green berets" grew, as they say, by leaps and bounds. If in 1961 there were only 1,800 people in the special forces, then a year later they tripled. A year later - ten times.

The main training base for the Green Berets was the now world-famous Fort Bragg in North Carolina. This part was originally called the "school of special forms of war." Later, similar schools were established in other places,

for example, in the Panama Canal Zone (Fort Gulik and Fort Sheman).

Nothing

like this existed in our country. Well, except perhaps in the Armed Forces in 1963, the first special-purpose brigade was created, which is deployed in the village of Chuchkovo, Ryazan Region.

There were no special forces in the system of the State Security Committee. And there is a need for them. It was then that they created the KUOS. Here, experienced

teachers, yesterday's front-line saboteurs, conducted training. The same Bolotov met the war near Rovno. After the war, fighting, wounds, he graduated from the Higher School of the NKVD, ended up on the Soviet-Romanian border. In 1945-1946 he worked with the Romanian agents, he knew the border like the back of his hand.

Together with him, the Kuosovites were trained by Ilya Starinov, Grigory Boyarinov, Boris Baranov. Lectures were given by Rudolf Abel, head of the department Vladimirov. In a word, no surname is a legend.

The following story happened to one of these combat teachers. They were going to fire him from the authorities, they say, at times he abuses alcohol. Personnel officers, frisky guys, quickly "riveted" the case and submitted it for signature to the gene

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Ralu. The general called the teacher and let's reprimand him. He endured, endured, but could not stand it, slashed in the heat of the

moment: - Why are you brave here ... You surrendered Vitebsk nine times, and we took it eight times ... The general

ordered to bring the personal file of the teacher. I read and called the personnel officers. "Leave the officer alone and never come back to this again," was all he said.

This story has long become a legend on KUOS. The profession of a scout-saboteur, like no other, needs legends. This is probably why the best people of the sabotage service worked both in the department and in the KUOS, whose names have become a kind of standard of courage and high professionalism. And among them are Generals Ivanov, Rodin, Gusev, Krasovsky, Vladimirov, Efimov, Tolstikov. This was the 13th department of Directorate "C" (illegal

intelligence). It accounted for all those dangerous operations in which our country participated to one degree or another.

One of the first after a long break was the events of 1967 in Czechoslovakia, which went down in history as the "Prague

spring".

"PRAGUE SPRING" IN THE FATE OF THE 13TH DEPARTMENT

On the eve of the introduction of troops into Czechoslovakia, the deputy head of the Intelligence and sabotage department of the KGB, Colonel Alexander Lazarenko, had a short meeting with one of his Czech agents. He was not the least bit excited.

- Something happened? Lazarenko asked. Agent with

He looked at the Moscow chief with disbelief - The troops are still being brought in ...
- You are confusing something, - now it's time to doubt Lazarenko. - No, I'm not confusing,
they called me from Poland. "Some kind of devilry..." thought the Colonel.
He remembered the arrival in Prague of the chairman of the Council of Ministers A. Kosygin, their meeting at the embassy. Commander-in-Chief of the GSVG Marshal Yakubovsky, KGB General Ivanov, he and two other officers. Kosygin listened attentively to each of them. Everyone was unanimous in their opinion: it is inexpedient to bring in troops. Even Marshal Yakubovsky supported them.

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Kosygin thanked the generals and officers and promised to report their opinion to the Politburo. Who knows whether he reported, and what happened there, on that meeting is hard to say.

It is now known that the decision to send troops was made at an expanded meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU and was approved by the rest of the members of the Communist Parties representing the participating countries of the invasion. This meeting took place in Moscow on 18 August. On

the night of August 20-21, the troops of the Soviet Union, Hungary, East Germany, Poland and Bulgaria entered the territory of Czechoslovakia. However, the clear and rapid implementation of the military operation was not supported by measures of a political nature. .

In essence, the politicians failed to achieve what they intended - the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia never turned to the Warsaw Pact states for help, the puppet government was not created, the party congress took place, and it condemned the invasion. It also failed to cope with the passive resistance of the people.

Member of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CPSU K. Mazurov, who arrived in Prague under the name of General Trofimov, telegraphed to Moscow: "The right is activated, the left is passive ... We propose to talk again with Dubcek and Chernik. In the evening it may be late and in Prague it will come to real battles. The situation was aggravated by the fact

that the action of the armed forces of the five states was regarded by most of the countries of the world as aggression. It was condemned by virtually all major communist parties, including Italian and French. The events in Czechoslovakia alarmed Yugoslavia and

Romania. True, the United States and many Western countries considered the "Prague Spring" to be a domestic showdown in their own communist kitchen and avoided open interference in the affairs of the region. The 13th reconnaissance and sabotage department of the First Main Directorate of the KGB took an

active part in the Prague events.

On May 2, 1968, Deputy Head of the Department Alexander Lazarenko summoned the head of the PGU, Colonel-General Sakharovsky.

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The order was short: "Take your guys, everything you need for work, and go to Prague today." There were no Moscow negotiations yet, during which Dubcek tried to convince Brezhnev, Podgorny and Kosygin to perceive the events in Czechoslovakia as a search for ways to improve the system, to eliminate the remnants of Stalinism. Even Minister of Foreign Affairs I. Gaek did not hear from A. Gromyko a reproach that in Czechoslovakia the counter-revolution was raising its head. The meeting of the five leaders of the Eastern European Communist Parties to discuss the situation in Czechoslovakia has not yet taken place in the capital of the USSR. All this will still be, but the 13th department of the KGB was already in Prague. Not without curiosities. One of the twelve employees of the department, which was headed by Lazarenko, was decently drunk. After all, May 2 is a holiday. I had to "load" it into the car, then onto the plane. While flying, sobered up.

The others also sobered up, although they did not drink. Situation developed rapidly and worsened every hour.

The military launched the Shumava headquarters exercises, politicians tried to find a way out of the situation. Increasingly, there were speeches about military assistance to Czechoslovakia. The year 1956, Hungary, was still fresh in my memory. When Soviet soldiers and officers were fired from rooftops, from the attics of buildings, from basements. Losses numbered in the hundreds of troops. Nothing like this could be allowed in Czechoslovakia,

so as not to shed blood on either side.

If we talk about the invasion, then not far from the Prague airfield, a tank division of the Czechoslovak People's Army is deployed. There are 450 tanks in the unit. Powerful force! How will the tankers behave in the event of a conflict, on whose side will they be? No one dared to answer this question. Therefore, the only way out is that not a single tank should move with

places.

They invited the Minister of Defense of Czechoslovakia Martin Dzur to the embassy. In any case, the division must remain in the places of permanent deployment. Dzur gave his word that not a single tank would move.

So, in fact, it happened. Do not give this order to Dzur, the "Prague Spring" could have ended in casualties and blood. Fortunately, this did not happen. 293

As you know, in the original version, no one was going to intern Dubcek and his entourage in the Soviet Union. According to the scenario, Moscow saw Dubcek on vacation, at that time several of the most "intractable" figures were removed from the Presidium of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Czechoslovakia, as a result, the scales tipped in the direction of the pro-Moscow group. Then Dubcek himself, relying on the help of the allied troops, restores order in the country.

Alas, life played out a different scenario. An order was received to deliver Dubcek and his associates to Moscow. Colonel Lazarenko and his subordinates had to follow the order.

The whole story about this fits Alexander Ivanovich into a few sentences. "Together with the paratroopers, I entered his office. When he saw us, Dubcek began to cry. Well, they took him out, put him in a BTEER and sent him to Poland, from there to Moscow. That's All..."

Today in Russia they unequivocally negatively assess the entry of allied troops into Czechoslovakia. And rightly so, how else can you evaluate it? Many mistakes have been made, a blow has been dealt to the prestige of our country. Rejecting any forceful methods of resolving international conflicts, however, I think that current politicians should take at least one quality from the "Brezhnev communist arsenal" - the desire to defend the interests of their own country.

Let the Brezhnev Politburo do it "totalitarian clumsy," but it did at least something.

In July 1968, during negotiations in Cierna nad Tisou, the leaders of the CPSU and the CPC, Kosygin said: "Realize that your western border is our border."

Yes, it is said too frankly, stereotypically, in the spirit of stagnant times. However, I want to appeal to those who have reason: "Realize where our western border is today?" I dare to remind the forgetful: at the walls of Smolensk, gentlemen.

I know that there will be a well-known argument that no one is attacking us. Come on, only a blind man can't help but see how we are "taught" to walk in the right direction, to look with a gaze submissive to the West, to trade not what we want, but what they want. I think soon we will be taught to breathe "their way". And if we resist, they will cut off the oxygen. The first step towards this has already been taken: NATO stands

at Brest. And we?

Well, except perhaps on the advice of a popular TV showman, sprinkle

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Lem border with NATO dustom. And chuckle at a stupid joke.

Well, time will tell who was right, the current jokers or prime minister of stagnant times.

But back to the Prague Spring. She went a deep furrow through the fate of people. And not only Czechs, Slovaks, but also Soviet citizens. When employees of the 13th

department flew out to pacify the "Prague counter-revolution", Bogoraz, Delone, Litvinov, Fainberg, Babitsky, Baeva came to Red Square ...

This fact is quite well known, the names of human rights activists have been widely heard in recent decades. But few people know that Marina Mazanik, Hero of the Soviet Union, agent of the sabotage service, participant in the liquidation of the fascist Gauleiter Kube, was among those who opposed the entry of troops into Czechoslovakia. Nobody ever wrote about it. So the "Prague Spring" divorced

intelligence agents

sabotage service on both sides of the barricades.

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PART FIVE "PAPER"

SPECIAL RESERVE

In 1946, Abakumov disbanded the special-purpose brigade, which was capable of performing special tasks abroad. The divisions of the NKVD, which

fought against the Ukrainian and Baltic bandit formations, were also disbanded by the end of the 50s.

Thus, the NKVD, and later the KGB, did not have any units with experience in reconnaissance and sabotage work, especially experience working abroad.

Yes, the 13th department operated under the First Main Directorate, and a special-purpose brigade was also closed to it in case of war. As such, the brigade did not exist in peacetime, although there were "states" on paper. Sometimes this "special reserve" was assembled at one point or another of the Union, exercises were conducted, but then the "reservists" dispersed to places of permanent service, and the brigade was again only on paper. Of course, the 13th department had its own

agents who could perform, as the Chekists say, an "acute" task. But it was, of course, about "piece" and very valuable material. Essentially, there were no forces to carry out large-scale operations.

So the 60s passed. The end of the 1970s was characterized by the aggravation of the situation on our southern borders and, first of all, with our traditional neighbor - Afghanistan.

But what exactly is the complication? It would seem that many books have been written about the Afghan war, political decisions have been made, the introduction of troops has been recognized as erroneous.

It's like that. However, in a fit of denial today, we often try to reject objective reality, close our eyes to the prevailing pre-war situation.

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Let's listen to the professionals. The floor was given to the former head of the illegal intelligence department of the KGB of the USSR, Major General Yuri Drozdov: - For

the first time I had to face the Afghan problem in New York. Careful observation of this problem as early as 197-1979 pointed to the exacerbation of the anxiety of the leadership of the USSR for the situation on the southernmost borders. The changes that took place in

the political life of Afghanistan in 1978 seriously disturbed the opponents of the USSR, because they made it difficult to implement their plans. In the CIA, for example, it was decided to actively, with the help of specially trained agents, counteract the strengthening of the Taraki regime. American intelligence officers who trained agents from among the Afghans argued that they would not give up Afghanistan so easily to the Russians, that they would create an international armed coalition of resistance to the new regime and would work to weaken Soviet influence in the country, up to the deployment of the Basmachi movement in Soviet Central Asia. How I would like the above to be only a reflection of the careless statements of American

scouts in conversations with agents, but everything that happened later was the practical implementation of these plans. It seems that General Drozdov is deeply right.

Tajikistan, or rather Gorno-Badakhshan, is a unique pantry of the world. Back in the 1950s and 1960s, Soviet scientists conducted surveys and concluded that there are huge reserves of uranium ore here. Which is practically non-existent in today's Russia. After all, it has long been no secret that there is only one uranium deposit left on the territory of Russia. Moreover, Tajikistan is unspeakably rich in other minerals. Here is the whole periodic table, and even the highest

quality.

That is why they are trying with all their might to oust Russia from Tajikistan, they are in a hurry to establish a new silk road from the "pantry of the world". But it would be nice to remind someone that even a

century ago Gorno-Badakhshan voluntarily joined Russia. So, everything that is happening in
population Tajikistan began in

late 1970s in seemingly distant Afghanistan.

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It is not true that Brezhnev, Andropov, Ustinov, who are now credited with the sole decision to send troops, did not try to cut the "Afghan" knot peacefully. The current realities show that, alas, not all problems can be solved at the negotiating table. This happened in 1979. The same General Drozdov told me that on December 31, after his report to Andropov on the progress of the operation in Kabul, Yuri Vladimirovich admitted that they tried to solve

this problem differently, it did not work out. From an operational and tactical point of view, the coup in the Afghan capital on December 27 was successful. The next morning, the Afghan people had a different president. However, any operation, especially this one, is impossible without proper, thorough preparation.

And so they began to cook it back in the summer-autumn of 1979. No, this does not mean that already in July the KGB was given a specific task - to carry out a coup in Kabul. I think such a decision came to the "Kremlin elders" much later. But where the situation becomes more

complicated, reconnaissance is always activated. And the situation was complicated directly on our southern borders, and therefore the increased interest in this area of the State Security Committee is quite understandable. In the summer of 1979, the first group of employees left for Afghanistan, united in a single unit under the code name "Zenith". In

The group was headed by KGB Colonel Boyarinov, who supervised an advanced training course for officers. Grigory Ivanovich was appointed to command the first Zenith for a reason. He is an experienced reconnaissance saboteur, a front-line soldier, and in the unit his students,

pupils.

However, it all started much earlier...

FIGHTERS FOR "ZENIT"

In the "UAZ" of the head of the department of the higher school of the KGB, Colonel Boyarinov, a good dozen teachers crammed. Moved from one training location to another. I did not want to walk on foot, night, darkness, forest, damp underfoot. That's why they decided - it's better to go badly than to go well. 298

"Grisha," as the teachers called the head of the department, was sitting in front, in the place of the head of the car. We drove for a long time. The UAZ zigzag through the forest roads in the dark, picking out the white birch trunks at the roadside, the dull blackness of the bowl, or the bushes right on the way with the beam of headlights. The officers were already looking at their watches: they should have arrived in time. "Grisha got lost," one of the young teachers whispered almost inaudibly. Another stood up for Boyarinov. And again the night, washed out by the rains, a barely noticeable road. Boyarinov, who seemed to be dozing before, shook himself,

leaned towards the driver.

- Quiet, Vasya. Now there will be a small turn, you press against the left side and slow down for a minute. - What, Grigory Ivanovich, - they joked in the car, - have they laid a mine? The Colonel didn't answer. "UAZ" slowed down, stopped.

Boyarinov opened the door, peered into the darkness, sighed with satisfaction:

- Here, my bird, here, dear, sits on the nest. Already laid eggs. - And he nodded to the driver: - Move slowly, just do not accelerate. Let's scare off. The car rocked and crept forward almost

silently. IN

the cabin went silent. That's Grisha! Around

the corner we came to a familiar edge. - All the guys,

unload, - Boyarinov said, - the third training point. As ordered ... And you, Anatoly Alekseevich, sit down for a while, - he turned to the teacher of the department Nabokov, - there is work.

Nabokov watched as, looking around in surprise at Boyarinov, young teachers crawled out of the UAZ. They believed that Grisha got lost. Ignorant. Grisha could not get lost. Grisha is a god in orientation, he sees like an owl in the dark. The forest, like a book, reads by heart.

Where did he get it from? From the war. Partisan, fought, commanded a school of snipers, prepared sabotage groups for being thrown into the rear, he himself flew over the front line more than once. - Tolya! Boyarinov turned to Nabokov. We are returning to Moscow.

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- That is, how - to Moscow? And the exercises, Grigory Ivanovich?

"The exercises will end without us. -
Something happened? - How
to say to you. Boyarinov fell silent, rubbing his overgrown stubble with the back
of his hand. - I would like to believe that nothing serious happened, - In general,
we need to redo the curriculum. — Increase course? No, cut it down. We are
releasing the current set not in August,
but in June. - So what
is next? - Special mission. Afghanistan. — Afghanistan? Nabokov was
surprised. The
name of a
distant country sounded so
unexpected that he struggled to remember its outlines on the map. - I'm waiting
tomorrow

your proposals By
program ... Returning to Moscow, they sat down to redraw the curriculum. They
counted, shoveled, spent more hours on combat topics, such as reconnaissance
in a given area, in a city, organizing an ambush, a raid. In general, they were
preparing to teach listeners what is needed in the war. Weeks of preparation flew
by and a command was received: to select
people for Zenit. The subdivision received such a conditional name. The
general arrived, he was laconic. He repeated what everyone already knew, and at
the end of the
conversation he asked who was not ready to carry out the special task. The
hall did not move.

So, everyone is ready! - summed up the representative of the leadership of the
KGB. However,

Boyarinov and his department had their own opinion. Having formed a
credentials committee and having considered each student, having weighed all the
pros and cons, they took ten candidates. Then, for the first time in his life, Nabokov
saw a man, an

officer, a KGB officer, crying. They took him away because they considered
him psychologically unprepared

to possible combat loads.

All ten attacked Boyarinov's office from the early morning, asking, pleading,
arguing, but the head of the department was adamant. For some teachers tried to
ask,

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perceiving the impregnability of Grigory Ivanovich as excessive severity or even
stubbornness.

A few months will pass, and life will teach a cruel lesson, confirming the
correctness of Boyarinov. It so happened that

the first part of Zenit finished a business trip in September. A gradual change
has begun. However, there were not enough people and they decided to ignore
the conclusions of the boyar commission. They reasoned as follows: they say,
what to sift, select - all KGB officers, more than once checked in the case. And on
the second run, the group included employees assigned by the "mandate". They
ended up in the thick of it - at the storming of Amin's palace. Two of them died, the
third was seriously wounded and died

on the way to the Union. The fourth came to Afghanistan later and was also seriously wounded. Coincidence?

Hardly. They say that Colonel Boyarinov was well versed in people. Was it worth sending those officers into the flames of war? Of course not. Probably, there would be a job for them at home. But all this will become known later, when Grigory Ivanovich will no longer be alive.

And in July 1979, Zenit-1 departed for Afghanistan. The group was headed by Candidate of Military Sciences, Associate Professor, Colonel Grigory Ivanovich Boyarinov. He returned from there in September. At the same time, they had a detailed conversation with Nabokov, and Anatoly Alekseevich said that he was ready to go to replace the head of the department. And he even complained, they say, teachers and younger ones have already gone, but he still doesn't.

Boyarinov will grin and paternally put his hand on his shoulder:

Don't rush, Tolya. Feels my soul - Afghanistan to us long enough. It sounds bitter, but I'm afraid that for a long time.

And sadly he will add:

"Trust me, old man ...

"GUYS, YOU HELP US"

But until there was "Zenith-2", the storming of the palace, everyone was alive and

well. The first Zenith arrived in Kabul on 5 July. We moved to our embassy, located at the school. Summer, no students.

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Folders were placed. Mattresses were still found, but there were no pillows, they rolled up the linen, stuffed it into a plastic bag, wrapped it in a towel: now the pillow is ready.

Eat your own, dry rations. Boyarinov ordered to save, because no one knew how long to live and serve here. In the morning, seagulls, and a jar of porridge for three, in the afternoon, soup from a concentrate, a jar of canned food, biscuits. In a word, on such allowance they reached, as they say, to the handle. They tried not to think about food, money, the main thing is to complete the tasks. And there were quite a few of them, and the tasks were not very simple: guarding the embassy, training local young counterintelligence officers, and most importantly, reconnaissance of the city, state and government buildings, special services facilities, army headquarters and barracks, approaches and entrances to them, security systems. Routes were also worked out in case of evacuation of our diplomats.

So the "Zenith" had to travel and stomp Kabul along and across.

Meanwhile, tensions in the capital grew. Shooting broke out every night. The "Khalkists" and "Parchimists" were at enmity. Amin rushed to power. Here is how the Zenit fighter Valery Kurilov recalls

those days: - There is enmity between Amin and Taraki. The Soviet ambassador

and the KGB representative travel every day, reconcile them. Peace in the morning

another quarrel in the evening.

One day, our guys, who were in the guard of the ambassador, arrived, they were unloading their pistols, their hands were trembling. They say that now they almost shot each other.

Once again, Amin, Taraki and our ambassador gathered. All security was downstairs. Suddenly shots are fired inside, a bloodied man runs out, falls. It turned out to be Tarun.

The guards of Taraki, Amin and ours pulled out pistols, pointing at each other. Nobody understands. They dare not shoot. And how to shoot: who knows what happened there.

Amin ran out, got into the car, sped away. Then there were lavish funerals. The headlines in the newspapers: "Vile enemies killed the faithful son of the Afghan people Tarun." After Amin

destroyed Taraki. started
assassination attempts on ministers, supporters of the murdered president.
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One was shot through the door, the other wanted to be killed through window.

In general, we participated in the rescue of three ministers - Sarvari, Gulyabzoya and, it seems, Watanja.

They were secretly taken from their place of residence to the embassy, dressed in a "gerbil" uniform. Then they were taken to one of our villas. There I got close to Sarvari. You could say he got along. They lived in enclosed spaces with no windows.

We only went out for a walk at night. Every time I had to accompany them. Sarvari promised everything: "Guys, you help us, then I will arrange a wonderful life. Come with
your families on vacation, I will give everyone a car."

Finally, a plane from the Union arrived, wooden boxes were brought. We put mattresses in there, drilled holes. The ministers got into them. The boxes were put in the back of the car, and they were thrown with boxes. Our guy is driving. There are five armed

Zenit soldiers in the back of a man. Behind the car was a bus, also with our people.

And to Bagram, neither more nor less - 70 miles. Aminovskaya
"outdoor advertising" overlaid us immediately after leaving the embassy.

At the exit from Kabul checkpoint. Stop! "What's in your back, get out, we'll check." The Afghan officer insists, he has an order. We refuse, you have no right, machines
embassies.

The truck is tightly covered with an awning. Here an Afghan lieutenant gets on board and looks under the awning. And Dolmatov Alexander Ivanovich, our instructor in hand-to-hand combat, a shoe on his hand and a machine gun in his nose.

The lieutenant was upset, his hand was derg-derg. Dolmatov is holding. And outside, you can't see anything. In general, he pulled out his palm, jumped off, looking, and there were also tense faces in the bus. He waved, shouted: "open, open, let them go ..."

The ship's commander says: "Now everything will be fine,

the main thing is that the fighters do not raise. Fighters, fortunately, did not appear.

Opened boxes. Sarvari jumped out reddened and furious. He rushed to the porthole: "Why are you taking us away? I will raise my people. We'll kill the tyrant."

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"Zenith" only smiled, reassured. They had studied the Afghans well, and the ex-minister's ostentatious fury did not surprise them at all.

Everything ended in peace. The Afghans were treated. They drank a glass, ate. Calmed down. They made a bed for them, and they slept peacefully all the way from Bagram to Tashkent.

In Tashkent, Zenit fighters handed over the ministers intact and safety to local committee members and flew to Moscow.

It was September 1979. Three months remained before the assault on Amin's palace ...

COLONEL BOYARINOV'S SPECIAL TASK

Nabokov was the last to board the bus. He lingered on the step, looked back again - Boyarinov was not there. Strange. Over the past year, yes there is a year - years, he does not remember the case when Grigory Ivanovich was late for the service bus, which every morning picked them up at the agreed place.

"Something has happened," Nabokov thought anxiously, "have you fallen ill?" recent exercises, a twenty-kilometer march that Grisha walked with one of the groups of listeners. Somehow, the completely healthy appearance of the colonel did not fit with the word "illness". Yes, they saw each other yesterday. Boyarinov was in excellent shape.

Nabokov breathed a sigh of relief only when he saw a light in the office of the head of the department. He went up to his floor, to the staff room. The door of the Boyarin's office is ajar, and Grigory Ivanovich is in the doorway. In civilian clothes: he is wearing a turtleneck, a jumper over it.

Seeing Nabokov, he smiled affably, nodded: come in... - What happened, Grigory Ivanovich? "Nothing happened, Tolya.

The situation has changed. I need to go there. Nabokov looked inquiringly, he didn't care much.

understood.

"A major operation is being prepared. I was at the head of department yesterday. He

looked up from the papers laid out on the table and guiltily

shrugged: 304

- I'm afraid that the guys would not be put there in vain. But I'm still something what's in this Peter, right, Anatoly Alekseevich? What could

Nabokov answer: right. Just to know what kind of operation. It is not customary to ask, since he does not speak. Or maybe

he himself does not know.

- You and I, as we wrote in textbooks: "A raid is

a sudden, coordinated attack on an immovable object of the enemy with the goal ... and te-de and te-pe ... "So? - And those who went to prepare the raid, do they know what it should be eaten with? Nabokov

spread his hands: they probably know... Boyarinov only smiled bitterly: - God forbid, Tolya! God

forbid... What Grigory Ivanovich

had in mind, now one can only guess. Little did he trust those who flew off to prepare the operation, was he not sure of their experience, professional knowledge, or was he simply afraid for his pupils? He, of course, became aware of the details of the assault that did not take place due to poor preparation, and he considered it his duty to be there this time. After all, behind Boyarinov's back was not only the experience of a KGB officer, but the experience of partisan and sabotage work. Before writing his dissertation on the tactics of partisan formations, Grisha Boyarinov studied it in practice. Was injured. Awarded with the Order of the Red Banner.

Now, two decades later, no, no, yes, and there will be a dispute among people who knew Grigory Ivanovich - could he not go? Still, by that time he was already quite a few years old - fifty-seven, he might not have gone under bullets. All those who went up with him to attack the storming of Amin's palace were his sons by age, and some were fit for grandchildren.

No, he couldn't help but go. And not only because the authorities wanted it that way - only this was how a front-line soldier, teacher, KGB colonel Grigory Boyarinov could do. Do you

remember how the officer suspended from his trip to Afghanistan cried in his office? From today's everyday life, tears may seem strange to us. But it was. It was considered a disgrace when a KGB officer was removed from a special task.

Could Boyarinov remove himself? It's funny even think. 305

...At 10 am the department gathered. Boyarinov transferred the general leadership to his deputy Vladimir Mikhailovich Sankov. They laid the table, poured one hundred grams, drank - and went to Chkalovskoye, to the plane. Boyarinov left, and the

teachers of his department - Nabokov, Vasyukov, Bolotov - remained, stood, smoked. Nabokov and Bolotov sometimes exchanged a word or two, while Vasyukov was sullenly silent. Then he looked at them, squinting in the smoke. - Something I didn't like Grisha today. Nabokov

caught himself thinking that he agreed with Vasyukov.

Some kind of shadow lay on Boyarinov's face. Could he have known then that it was the shadow of death...

WHO NEEDS A BLOODY "PERFORMANCE"?

... On December 12, KGB Major Yakov Fedorovich Semenov, commander of the Zenit subgroup stationed in Kabul, was summoned by the general. It was an army general, a paratrooper. On

The meeting was also attended by officers of the "Muslim battalion". The course of the operation, about which

Semyonov had a very vague idea, was discussed. The general, whose task was to coordinate the actions of Zenit and army units, turned to the major - your group will have to go to the facility. Time "H" ... The major could not resist and, violating military subordination, interrupted the general. — What object, comrade general? Now it's time

surprise the general.

- You don't know? - I don't know. "Damn

it," thought the general, "again there's a discrepancy at the border of departments." "Here, look," and he pointed

Semyonov to a map of Kabul, "the palace..." "I see. And his plan, the forces, the means of the defenders. The general

didn't understand at all. KGB advisers used to spend days and nights in this palace, and at the right moment the major doesn't know a damn thing about them. However, the general held back. The Major had nothing to do with it.

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"All right," the general said wearily, "I give you two hours, Semyonov, think about what can be done. The meeting is over. Two hours is not so hot, but

Yakov Fedorovich found out something: the opposing side, as tactics like to say, has two thousand guardsmen, 11 tanks, and two tanks are dug up to the tower right at the gate. And what is behind the gate, only God knows. But, one must think, the yard is also not empty. Semenov has two "Shilka", six armored personnel carriers for 25

personnel person.

In terms of manpower, the ratio is 1:100; in terms of armored vehicles, only a madman can compare: a tank and an armored personnel carrier are the same as an elephant and pug.

It even seemed to Yakov Fyodorovich that they were playing a childish game, and all this was not serious. But when the set two hours expired and the command came: "Go to your places!", the major, climbing into his armored personnel carrier, suddenly clearly understood: history has not taught us anything, again we will "throw hats" on the enemy

On that day, history, apparently, was remembered not only by Semenov. They gave a break. It was only a day before the show was due. But Yakov Fedorovich was uneasy: he went to the general, asked to go to the city in order to better examine the object that was to be stormed. The general didn't mind. Just reminded me to be careful. Well, the army commander might not have talked about this to the major of state security, a teacher in the special department of the Higher School of the KGB. He himself taught caution and secrecy to young officers. Semyonov, wasting no time, changed his clothes - and on the road. "Twisted" around Kabul, reconnoitred approaches, entrances. After

left the car and walked around the palace on foot. And once again I was convinced of the wisdom of the old army commandment: if there is even the slightest opportunity to conduct reconnaissance in the area where we have to fight, it must be used. In intelligence, everything was

indicated exactly: the number of tanks, both buried in the ground and standing in other positions, and the strength of the guards, but these data concerned only the protection of the palace. And next to the palace was the General Staff of the Afghan army. Not a word about him.

The General Staff is not the Ministry of Agriculture. There are strong guards, air defense systems, and General Staff officers, for sure, know how to hold weapons in their hands. 307

With these disturbing thoughts, Semyonov returned to Bagram and reported to the general. He listened to the major sullenly and even somehow doomed. But in the end he asked: "Your decision?" Oh, if

only he, Major Yakov Semenov, decided whether he would move his "armor" out of harm's way. But who will listen? Yes, and the general, one feels, is at an impasse: either he is afraid to report how it really is, or at the top they listen to him just like he listens to the major. Pressing, probably, the authorities

from Moscow, and the general has a strong little man with a gulkin nose. Even if you scrape everything up - both the "Muslim battalion" and "Zenith" to the last man - the advantage on the other side is huge. I wonder who needs this bloody performance? Put the guys at the walls of the palace? So it's easy, no big mind is needed.

No, Yakov Fedorovich understood: no one is interested in such a performance. And rightly so: the operation was again postponed. "Zenith" moved to Kabul, located near the "Muslim battalion"

Below, among the sparse gardens, towered the palace of Dar-ul-Amin, the new residence of Hafizullah Amin. It was visible without binoculars, powerful, with strong walls, surrounded by a serpentine of gray concrete. Now Semyonov

went to meetings at the embassy every day. Various options for taking the palace were worked out. The number of generals increased from meeting to

meeting. General Drozdov arrived from the First Main Directorate. Serious events were coming.

RESTAURANT FOR "ZENIT" ORDERED

The palace to be stormed was about a kilometer from the battalion's position. A place for a palace - it is better not to think of. From it left the highway leading to the mountains. That is, if necessary, there is a way to escape. About five hundred meters away is the solid building of the gendarmerie. To the left of the palace was the first guard battalion, to the right - the second. Between the positions of the battalions and the palace, three dug-in tanks. AND

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finally, the national guards - their barracks were located directly on the top floor of the palace. In the evenings, and sometimes at night,

if you couldn't sleep, the soldiers, leaving the barracks, looked at the palace shining with lights for a long time. All of them served on the committee for more than one year, and it was not difficult to estimate the balance of power. And from the estimates it became scary - the forces were so unequal. 24 people in Grom, about the same number in Zenith. Plus "Muslim battalion". But from the very beginning, only auxiliary tasks were assigned to him. So, count two platoons for such a fortress? And what else?

Two commanders, two majors, Semyonov and Romanov, got together, talked it over, clarified the task, assessed the situation, the situation was to hell - from the positions of the "Muslim battalion" only the serpentine of the road and the palace were visible, on one side turned towards them. What's on the other side? And at adjacent heights? The Afghans are not completely stupid, they studied in our academies, which means they know where to place their units. Nothing was known about them, although it was from there, most likely, that the attackers would be shot in the back of the head. To find answers to difficult questions, there is the only way invented by mankind over millennia of wars - reconnaissance.

You need to see everything with your own eyes and, based on what you see, act.

"Well, Yasha," suggested Romanov, feeling Amin's palace with the eyepieces of binoculars, "let's go to the restaurant?" - It's time, - Semyonov grinned, - have a bite to eat.

drink up.

"I'm serious, look," and he pointed in the direction of the officers' restaurant built by Amin. - If you climb there, everything is in full view - the palace, the road, the back side of the palace ... Shall we wave, Yasha?

- You can give up, just look: on the way to the checkpoint of the first battalion. It is, of course, not the only one on the way to the restaurant.

They raised their binoculars to their eyes - a familiar picture floated in the eyepieces: white slopes, some figures, paths trampled in the snow, metal doors right in the mountain, a rare garden, and above all this - the bulk of a three-story palace. Seen and re-seen more than once, but there is no clarity like no. Well, if it's necessary, it's necessary. We decided to go.

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... Four of them got into the GAZ-66: two commanders and two fighters to help - Mamzaev and Fedoseev. We moved. At the checkpoint of the first battalion they were stopped. Yasha nodded. - Keep your ears open. It starts! They didn't talk much

- a bayonet in the chest, hands up. Not

neither Yasha's documents nor the Romanov cockade helped.

The long wait began. They were held at gunpoint, they were not reported anywhere. Or so it seemed—perhaps a messenger had been sent.

The captives behaved peacefully, and the Afghans somehow became kinder,

it even turned out that the head of the guard had studied in the Soviet Union, at an agricultural college. He spoke quite fluent Russian. We tried to get him to talk. They began to

convince, they say, we are in the protection of Amin, we are going to a restaurant to book a table for the New Year for Soviet officers. The Afghan smiled, shook his head in agreement, but did not let

go. An hour and a half passed in waiting and talking, and finally the head of the guard, having received instructions, ordered them to pass. The car slowly climbed uphill, the officers sitting in it carefully looked around the area. Already behind was the

building of the gendarmerie, the positions of the second battalion, the palace. It seemed that the road led directly to the restaurant and all the cordons were left behind. But it only seemed. At the very restaurant they were stopped again, ordered to get out of the car. We were taken to the barracks under machine guns. On the way, the prisoners noticed machine-gun nests and fortified positions.

They were pushed into a small room. There were field telephones against the wall. One of the soldiers with a machine gun jumped up to them and, furiously spraying saliva, yelled, ready to smash his head with a rifle butt. Another,

who was sitting here, shouted, forced the screamer to move away. Then he asked in barely understandable Russian: who are they? They began to explain anew that they were serving in Amin's guard and were going to a restaurant to book a table for Soviet officers for the New Year. He listened and picked up

the field phone. He told someone for a long time, now and then glancing at the prisoners. Then he called again and again - there were negotiations. 310

The situation was dramatic - the groups were left without commanders, and a few hours later the assault. But everything worked out: they brought tea, put vases with figs and raisins on the table. For the first time in the past hour, smiles touched the lips of Afghans. The officer invited me to try the treat.

They explained that none of them likes sweets, they joked, they say, tea is not good for us, we prefer vodka.

Time was running out, the nerves were strained to the limit, but there was only one way out

- to wait. And here's the order - you can go to the restaurant. Dali guide, called the owner of the restaurant. They explained the situation.

The owner has nowhere to hurry. What barbecue to serve, he asks. I had to be patient. While we were discussing the merits of lamb shish kebab, we realized that we had to move upstairs. They asked me to show where the table would be.

From above, a great view: you can see Kabul, the palace, and, which is especially unpleasant, the positions of the "Muslim battalion" like in a frying pan. In order to detain the owner a little more and better look around, I had to ask about the dishes - forks, spoons, wine glasses, remind about napkins, ask about alcohol. In a word, we agreed. You will have a barbecue, you will!

We said goodbye, bowed, and at the exit again the Afghans detained us. Again calls, negotiations. But here they are. In the car - time is running out! The road in the sun melted, got wet, and the car would slip into the abyss, but it worked out, we returned to the battalion in time. At 16 o'clock the commander of the "Thunder" and his senior subgroups, the commander of the "Zenith" with his guys gathered for a joint briefing.

We decided to act like this: "Thunder" advances on infantry fighting vehicles and, following the serpentine ring, goes to the palace. "Zenith" on armored personnel carriers approaches the pedestrian stairs, overcomes it and connects at the facade with the "Thunder" fighters. With a simultaneous strike, the groups storm the palace.

The group, which included Colonel Boyarinov, Major Poddubny and Senior Lieutenant Kuvylin, was assigned the task of blowing up the communication center of the palace. A conventional sign by which you can recognize your own (after all, everyone is dressed in an Afghan uniform) is a white bandage on the sleeve. Voice signal by the names of the group commanders: "Misha" - "Yasha". 311

"TAKE CONTROL... THE CAPITAL"

The former director of the CIA, S. Turner, in his memoirs, says that the American intelligence agencies allegedly knew about the upcoming Soviet military invasion of Afghanistan. Is it so, today it is difficult to judge. Although it is known that many analysts were firmly convinced that the Soviet Union would not dare to send troops. After all, hostilities were already underway in Afghanistan, and the USSR was inevitably drawn into the war, which placed a heavy burden on the country's economy.

In general, opinions are divided. But it happened the way it happened. Soviet troops entered the neighboring state. And the Americans knew it was coming. But that this would happen on December 27, 1979, was known, of course, only to the participants in the events. The operation to seize power in Kabul was prepared covertly, and carried out, in essence, within a few hours. As for the direct assault on Amin's residence, the Darul-aman palace, it lasted only forty minutes. The dictator was killed, the guards guarding the palace surrendered or perished.

During the assault on the special forces "Zenith" and "Thunder" lost several people. A few days later, General Drozdov reported to the chairman of the KGB Andropov about the operation.

This operation is often called unique. And she really lives up to that high praise. True, not everyone agrees with this. After all, there are similar examples in world practice.

So, on the night of September 20-21, 1979, three companies of French paratroopers landed on the runway of the Bangui Central African airfield.

Republic. The paratroopers acted boldly and professionally. Soon they already controlled all the key objects of the city.

As planned, the new president, Dako, was delivered to the CAR on a French Air Force plane from Gabon. The deposed dictator was taken to the Ivory Coast, where he received political asylum. Paris proudly declared that the change of power was quick and bloodless. Such "fast and bloodless" operations were carried out not only

French, but also Americans. The difference between them in

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that this operation was carried out by our special services in Afghanistan. The "partners" of the Americans and the French in the transfer of power were tiny states. Thus, in the CAR, the population is only two million people. Is it necessary to explain that Afghanistan is a completely different state in terms of the scope of its territory, population, and training of the armed forces. The subsequent debilitating war proved this. In 1991, in a book about the Alpha group, I wrote for the first time: "Of all the

long, nine-year dramatic massacre, its beginning, the storming of Aminov's palace, is still the most mysterious. Whatever they piled up about the assault, what wild fictions and fables were published on the pages of magazines and newspapers, and the truth remained sealed with seven seals.

Ten years have passed. It would seem that all the "and" have been dotted, the liars and inventors have been exposed, the world has finally learned the truth, in addition to my book there were newspaper publications, television made a program in which the direct participants talked about this mysterious operation. In other words, truth prevailed. However, it only seemed to. At the end of 1996, I bought a book

with a loud title: "Special Services and Special Forces." She came out in a no less high-profile series: "Encyclopedia of secrets and sensations." Imagine my surprise when I read the amazing lines in this "encyclopedia": "On November 28, the Deputy Minister of Internal Affairs of the USSR, General Viktor Paputin, arrived in Kabul, who was entrusted with the mission of preparing the Soviet landing operation and eliminating Amin."

Which deputy minister? Where did he come from?

But further on the text is even more interesting. First, it depicts how Soviet chefs poisoned the dictator, then ... "one of Amin's bodyguards, who did not touch the food, discovered something was wrong and, when a detachment of Soviet paratroopers, led by Paputin, appeared, opened fire and killed the Soviet deputy minister on the spot. The Soviet paratroopers returned fire and shot Amin along with his entire family and servants. He showed the book to the direct participants in the storming of the palace. They were no less surprised than

me: "Some kind of nonsense ..." Well, you can probably understand and forgive those journalists who

who created their articles and books in the early 90s.

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Much was top secret, closed ... Hence the errors. But now the names of the participants in the assault are known throughout the country, why replicate fiction and lies?

However, the fact is there. So, there are again forces that benefit from a new wave of provocations, spitting, slandering the participants in this operation. And so I would like to go back to those days,

to that operation. First, to resist lies. Secondly, the coup in Kabul is our history. Modern history of the intelligence and sabotage service of the country. And whatever it is, we should judge it honestly and truthfully. So, 1979. Kabul. December ... A person, even very far from the problems of military art, at the sight of Amin's palace has a strange feeling, by the way, proven

dozens of times: what is called a palace

is not a palace at all - a fortress! A three-story building, massive walls capable of withstanding the impact of the most modern artillery system (during the assault, as you know, Shilka multi-barreled anti-aircraft guns were used, the shells of which, like nuts, bounced off the walls). The fortress was built with true oriental wisdom. At a dominant height, visible from all sides, and it is almost impossible to approach it unnoticed. Moreover, in order to be at the gates of the residence, it is necessary to overcome a circular serpentine road that winds along the hillside and is under close supervision of the

guards. So the advancing unit will have to circle for a long time along the road under the fire of the defenders of the palace, and it is simply ridiculous to talk about surprise as one of the victory factors. However, the point is not only in the skillful choice of the location of the palace and its fortification merits. A well-thought-out defense system turned it into a fortress. The residence was guarded by national guards - specially selected, carefully checked, well-trained military personnel. Each of them had something to protect. Engaging in battle with the attackers, they defended not only Amin, but also their comfortable life in a poor country, high salaries, solid rations that their

"father and benefactor" bestowed on them. A chic restaurant with a swimming pool, which was visited by the commanders of the Zenit groups and

purposes

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"Thunder" on the eve of the assault, was also for them - the national guards. One of the

participants in the operation recalled his first impressions of the meeting with the guards: "We were driving from the embassy to our location in the "Muslim battalion". The road passed not far from the palace. I asked the driver to slow down a bit. There was a changing of the guard. For us, an unusual exotic scene: when changing sentries - two-meter handsome guys - touched each other with their cheeks. Looking at these lean, athletic guys, a machine gun in their hands

which seemed like a child's toy, I thought: "Wow lads! You can't deal with those easily."

Yes, the palace was thoroughly fortified: tanks, two infantry battalions, a gendarmerie regiment, whose barracks were located not far away.

Even after a very cursory listing of the units and units that were in the hands of Amin, a natural question arises: how did you manage to take such a fortress in 40 minutes? And yet it happened. On a common signal, the Zenit and Grom fighters, with the support of paratroopers,

attacked not only Amin's palace, but also several other major military and administrative facilities in Kabul: the building of the General Staff of the Afghan Armed Forces, the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Tsarandoy), the headquarters of the Air Force, the prison Puli-Charkhi, post and telegraph, radio and television. In other words, almost the entire capital of Afghanistan had to be taken under control.

THE MAIN THINGS HAVE BEEN DONE

After the storming of Amin's palace, Tabeev, the ambassador of the Soviet Union to Afghanistan, arrived at the hospital where the wounded fighters of Alpha and Zenith were lying.

On the right lay Sergey Golov with nine wounds, on the left - Nikolai Shvachko. In the middle, Mikhail Romanov, with diseased kidneys, writhed. They heard as if whispered: "Ambassador, ambassador"... Tabeev bent over Romanov:

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Do you see me, son? - I see. Do you hear? — I hear. Thanks to

you and your

guys. They made everything clear. Not a single intelligence service in the world can understand who and with what forces carried out operation. Then you will have orders, medals. But that's not important. You have already accomplished the most important thing in life. Remember what I said.

So how was this truly unprecedented operation accomplished? On this occasion, there were many

inventions and outright lies in our press, and therefore I would like to begin my story with the story of General Yuri Ivanovich Drozdov, who directly led that operation. No one knows better than Drozdov about the events of December 1979 in Afghanistan:

- On December 27, 1979, I and V.V. Kolesnik (colonel of the GRU. - M.B.) at noon each went to his leadership again. B.S. Ivanov contacted the center and reported that everything was ready. Then he handed the receiver of the radiotelephone to me. Yu.V. Andropov.

— Will you go yourself?" he asked. I answer

— in the affirmative. take risks, think

— in vain Not of your safety and O take care of people. IN the location of the "Muslim battalion" drove in silence, each thinking about his own.

We had lunch and in the middle of the day once again went around the starting positions of the

battalion. Together with Kolesnik, we decided to gather the commanders of all companies, assault groups and fire support units in my room on the second floor. As a senior in rank V.V.

Kolesnik suggested that I open the meeting. In my brief speech, I gave a political assessment of the situation, revealed the general task set, gave an assessment of the forces and means of the enemy and the main object, our position, the balance of forces and means, the general distribution of forces and means of the "Muslim battalion". After that, V.V. Kolesnik gave a combat order to the units, listing specific tasks for each. 316

When V.V. Kolesnik, I carefully looked at the faces of the officers. All collected, a little tense. Everyone felt discipline and will. It began with the fact that a group of Zenit fighters went to the

square next to the city communications center. The square was quite crowded: there was a bank, a restaurant, a cinema, there was a permanent post of Tsarandoy.

And so they decided to act after nineteen hours, when the curfew came and the square was empty.

We left in three UAZs. Two cars were left at the restaurant, one stopped on the square, at the bridge where the "communication well" was located. It was the same "well", blowing up which, you can "cut off" the entire connection of Kabul with the outside world.

Then one of the central newspapers in Moscow would write like this: "The bandits carried out another sortie, and communication with the capital of Afghanistan was interrupted."

In a word, the fighters opened the hatch, and Boris Pleshkunov lowered powerful charges into the "well". The fuse was supposed to work in a quarter of an hour.

The fighters managed to return to base, and at the appointed time an explosion sounded. He became a call to action for everyone.

At the headquarters of the Air Force, where the "Alfa" Savelyev and Blinov operated, the disarmament of the guards and the arrest of the chief of staff began, "Zenith" and paratroopers jumped out of the cars near the building of the Ministry of Internal Affairs (Tsarandoy) and rushed

to the assault. Group A fighters Yevgeny Chudesnov and Alexander Lopanov covered Hyp Akhmat Nur. He shouted through a megaphone that the legitimate authorities had come, and urged them to hand over their weapons. From the windows of the ministry they responded with automatic fire.

By that time, Alpha had already suffered its first losses. Died Dmitry Volkov, sportsman, shooter. He was killed at one of the posts of the Afghan gendarmerie. Pavel Klimov was also seriously

wounded here. But the main things were done at the palace of

Amin. Romanov's group in combat vehicles must climb the "serpentine" up, and Semyonov's fighters in armored personnel carriers go to the pedestrian stairs. At the facade they are connected. But life often makes its own adjustments. So it was this time. The offensive of the "Semenovites" went under

hurricane fire, knocked out an armored personnel carrier. At

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had to lay down. We managed to raise our heads only when our "Shilka" suppressed a machine gun in the window of the palace.

Romanov's group also had to stop under fire. We drove around a wrecked Afghan bus, then our combat vehicle was hit. I had to parachute, lie down, open fire on the palace. But BMP number thirty-six had already managed to break through to the palace.

Karpukhin, Kolomiets, Grishin, Plyusnin entered the palace and started a fight.

At this time, Kuvylin and Zudin lay down about twenty meters from the palace, the position was dangerous - the fighters seemed to be in the palm of their hand. From the explosion of a grenade thrown from the palace, Gennady Zudin was wounded.

Several soldiers were led by Gleb Tolstikov, a fighter from Group A. They, in addition to machine guns, had ladders. The road leading to the palace was flanked on one side by a high concrete wall. You can't climb without a ladder.

It was planned that when landing from an infantry fighting vehicle, the soldiers would grab the ladders and go forward to storm. In fact, it turned out differently. They jumped out, came under fire, lay down - and it was as if they were frozen. Tolstikov had to rouse the soldiers with shouts and kicks. Somehow raised, ran to the palace.

The roar around was "brutal", as one of the fighters of the "A" unit later said. In two minutes of battle, out of 24 people from the "Romanov" group, 13 were wounded. But the battle was already raging on

the first floor. General Drozdov Yuri Ivanovich recalls: - When the assault groups of reconnaissance saboteurs broke into the palace and rushed to their objects inside the building, meeting strong guard fire, the special forces of the "Muslim battalion" who participated in the assault created a rigid impenetrable ring of fire around the object, destroying everything that had resistance. Without this help, the losses would have been much greater. A night fight, a fight in a building requires the closest interaction and does not recognize the separation of any departments.

In the building of Tsarandoi Chudesnov, together with the paratroopers, also fought. They identified Nur in one of the offices, posted guards and moved to "clean up" the floors.

In the first minutes of fire contact with well it was very difficult for the trained guards of Amin's palace. Tem

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moreover, that the guards significantly outnumbered the attackers in manpower. By all tactical canons, such an attack is doomed. But it turned out differently. At this time, Grigory Boyarinov and

Sergei Kuvylin remained to cover the corridor. This was a few minutes before the death of Colonel Boyarinov. He will later be found murdered at the exit of the palace. A group of Evald Kozlov, Sergei Golov, Mikhail Sobolev, Plyusnin, Grishin,

Filimonov broke through to the second floor. They were supported by "Semenov" fighters. By sound

machine guns tried to determine where their own, and where strangers. The grenade was thrown forward and followed the explosion. Only large glass doors without frames interfered. Can't see in the dark. You throw a grenade, and it returns under your feet. In offices and

halls, they searched for Amin, the head of the guard, Major Dzhandat, on whose orders Taraki was strangled. The fight was hard

and fierce. Yemyshev's arm was torn off, Baev's neck was shot. Kuznetsov was seriously wounded in the leg, shrapnel hit Nikolai Shvachko in the eye. But the victory was ours. All groups, both in the captured Amin's palace, and in the buildings of

Tsarandoi, and at the headquarters of the Air Force, spent a restless, sleepless night. So, at midnight, a message came to the Air Force

headquarters: a column of Afghan tanks was moving towards the headquarters. And there are only three infantry fighting vehicles on guard. They began to think and guess how to organize defense.

Our experienced, sensible major-advisor came to the rescue. He doubted: they say, where are the tanks from?

Savelyev, together with the major, rode out to meet the column. It turned out that the tanks were Soviet. They get lost and go in the opposite direction. I had to cool the hot heads of the tankers.

Chudesnov's group spent the night in the Tsarandoy building. In the morning, Babrak Karmal spoke on the radio. Hyp listened intently to the speech of the new head of state.

In the palace, the morning had to be greeted at the command of General Drozdov: "Prepare for battle! To repel an attack." There was data: Amin's tank "blue" division rose and moved to the palace.

And when it dawned, the soldiers saw the planes: the Vitebsk airborne division was landing at the airfield in Bagram. The operation has ended. A long nine-year war began.

General Drozdov recalls:

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- On the same day, on New Year's Eve, 1980 (we are talking about December 29, after returning from Kabul), I asked my wife to go with me to Manezhnaya Square to the Eternal Flame. A rare snow fell. New Year's Eve Moscow was buzzing all around, having learned about the Afghan events from a meager message on the radio. Her, like the whole country, everyday life has not yet been overshadowed by funerals, sometimes ahead of the "Black Tulips". We put a few bright carnations near the Eternal Flame, were silent, and just as silently went home.

Years will pass. Much will change in the fate of those who stormed Amin's palace. The outlook on Afghanistan, on that war, will also change. The blood spilled on the steps of the palace will remain unchanged, holy. Here only to know, for the sake of what it has been spilled?'

"MENTOR AND FATHER"

The heroes of the Afghan war are not deprived of either honor or attention in our country. The country knows and loves them. They occupied and hold high state and government positions,

lead public organizations.

The press is attentive to them, films and television programs have been created, and Afghan heroes occupy a worthy place in the books of the most authoritative authors. It is enough to name just a few names and it will become clear that even today, after many years, they are on everyone's lips. Alexander Rutskoi, Pavel Grachev, Boris Gromov, Ruslan Aushev, Valery Ochirov. Of the more than 200 thousand awarded from the limited

contingent of Soviet troops in Afghanistan, 67 people became Heroes of the Soviet Union, 24 of them posthumously. In the bodies of the Ministry of Internal Affairs, this title was awarded to Colonel Mikhail Isakov. There is information that the State

Security Committee nominated 13 people for the title of Hero. But whether they were all awarded the high rank is unknown. Even those who became Heroes were silent for a long time. In personal files, their surnames were stamped: "without publication in the press." And yet, despite the prohibitions, the name of the first Hero was leaked to the pages of newspapers. True, in some wild guise, the Hero of the Soviet Union appeared before us

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Boyarinov. They wrote that going to storm the palace of Amin, he yelled terribly and cursed the officers. It seemed as if the colonel didn't know how to do anything else, how to water his subordinates with foul language. After reading these lines, one can smile and generously forgive the

dishonesty, whether the evil intent of the person who launched the dirty "duck" into flight. There was a certainty that the next writer would definitely ask himself the question: how did people, entirely swearers, screamers and talkers, manage to complete a unique, unprecedented task in such lightning speed, clearly and with minimal losses? But, unfortunately, I must say: the first Hero was not often mentioned in our documentaries, but if they talked about him, they referred to the opinion of that very unknown author, who allegedly saw Boyarinov in battle and heard mate and screams with his own ears. Is it possible that our own history is not dear to us and we are ready to easily agree with what it is impossible to agree with - and leave an honest man, a real Hero, slandered? In one of the books about the Afghan war, there were quite a few surprising lines: "Except for those who received the

Gold Star for the assault on Amin's palace (there were some), then the next Hero (from the living) was paratrooper Sergey Kozlov." Ridiculous words: why, in fact, not count those who received the Star for storming Amin's palace? Yes, that's right,

there were. Maybe they were shot with rubber bullets? Or are the blood and lives of the Zenith and Thunder fighters worth nothing? It is also easy to see the common thing that guided both

officers of the KGB, and officers of the airborne troops. By the way, during the assault on the Dar-ul-Amin palace, they went into battle together, shoulder to shoulder, in the same infantry fighting vehicles and armored personnel carriers, and no one hid behind

each other's backs. So why should we count some and discount others? Maybe that's why we still don't know what Colonel Grigory Boyarinov really was? And you should know. It's time to return his name to our military history. And let him take his rightful place in it.

Grigory Boyarinov was the son of his time. He was born in 1922 and volunteered for the army at the age of 17. Graduated from the Sverdlovsk Infantry School, in the forty-first

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He received the rank of junior lieutenant and his first front-line position - the commander of a mortar platoon. Fate threw him to the North-Western Front. Here he received his first baptism of fire, and the first award - the medal "For Courage". At all times, from the day it was introduced, the medal "For Courage" was especially valued. What can I say - a medal for all medals. It is difficult to say why this award gained such authority - perhaps because it had a reflection of the St. George Cross, a soldier's award given in the Russian army for personal bravery and courage.

With the coming to power of the Bolsheviks, the St. George Cross was abolished, but over time they guessed to introduce a medal, which became popular and loved in the Red Army.

It was awarded to Junior Lieutenant Grigory Boyarinov for that with his platoon he destroyed the infantry company of the Nazis.

It was doubly pleasant to learn about the award to the father of Gregory - Ivan, Knight of St. George.

In December 1941, Gregory was transferred to the fighter regiment of the North-Western Front, and already on February 1, 1942, he was seconded to the border regiment of the NKVD. How the lieutenant ended up in the border unit is now unlikely to be found out. A soldier, an officer, especially at the time of the front, was not free to dispose of himself. Where they said, he served there, beat the Nazis. Today, when mentioning the troops of the NKVD, special detachments come to mind,

which even during the war served as executioners: they tortured and shot the so-called "enemies" of the Soviet regime, evicted the repressed.

But there were other units, also part of the NKVD troops, their soldiers worked in reconnaissance and sabotage groups deep behind enemy lines, they became the backbone of partisan detachments in the network of partisan formations, and carried out special tasks behind the front line. This is what Grigory Boyarinov did for more than two and a half years in the border regiment on the North-Western, Leningrad and 2nd Baltic fronts. He commanded a school of snipers, trained sabotage units, he himself led them more than once, leaving behind the front line. In one of these operations, a special forces unit under his command destroyed the headquarters of the Italian division.

Boyarinov was awarded the Order of Combat Red

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Banner. Front-line soldiers remember what such an order meant in 1942. Grigory Ivanovich ended the war as chief of staff of the border commandant's office, and in subsequent years he served in the 106th border detachment of the North-Western border district. It was here that an incident occurred that forever entered the history of the district. On a small plane, Boyarinov pursued three border violators ... This would not have been unusual, but the plane was single and only the pilot could be in the cockpit. There was only one thing left, which the border guard did: he climbed onto the wing and ordered to take off.

The plane landed on the ice of the Gulf of Finland and the officer chased the violators for several more kilometers. They ran to the shore, hid in the rocks and opened fire. Boyarinov, firing from a rifle, did not allow the spies to get out of their hiding place and go across the border. Soon reinforcements arrived, the violators surrendered. In 1948, Captain Grigory Boyarinov was sent to study at the Military Institute of the USSR Ministry of State

Security. He graduates with honors and remains in the department. A few years later, the young teacher becomes an adjunct of the Military Academy. M. V. Frunze, successfully defends his dissertation.

What is Boyarinov studying? What he learned in practice and checked in combat conditions - the tactics of partisan actions.

On November 14, 1959, the academic newspaper Frunzevets wrote about Adjunct Boyarinov's Ph.D. methods of their implementation, the means used in the conduct of reconnaissance and combat operations, the organization of interaction with regular troops.

The deep development of the topic was greatly facilitated by the fact that the dissertator himself participated in the activities of partisan formations during the Great Patriotic War, which allowed him to more fully assess the successes and failures of individual operations, to more widely cover the range of problems associated with the organization and conduct of partisan struggle, to come to interesting and reasonable conclusions." After completion of the postgraduate course and defense of the dissertation

Grigory Ivanovich becomes a teacher at the Higher Krasno

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famous school. F. E. Dzerzhinsky. Now he has everything for successful pedagogical work - scientific knowledge, rich practical experience.

Boyarinov worked for 18 years at the Higher School of the KGB. Over the years, numerous scientific works have been written, he headed one of the special departments of the school. He had many students. It was with them, having formed the first Zenit detachment and led it, that he went to Afghanistan. Returned in September, and flew away in December

again. Could he, in that battle, hide behind the armor of an infantry fighting vehicle, enter the palace not in the forefront, not rush into the inferno? Probably could. But he did not lag behind, did not take cover behind the armor. His students were proud of him. There was, of course, both regret and such an opinion: they say, it would be better for the old man not to meddle under fire. What to answer these people? Boyarinov's life is the best answer to that. And also the memorial verses of one of the fighters: "Farewell, mentor and father. We will remember you as a hero! God grant that this memory be long and bright.

ZENIT - CASCADE - OMEGA

The history of the Cascade has not yet been written. Although a decade and a half has passed since then. Not time, not time - repeat "stuntmen". And yet we will tell at least a few glorious deeds of the special forces detachment.

Its first commander was Colonel, later Major General Alexander Ivanovich Lazarenko. I am well acquainted with Alexander Ivanovich,

I heard a lot about him from the lips of my colleagues and I think: Andropov made a wise choice by appointing a combat commander, a front-line soldier, yesterday's paratrooper, to head the "Cascade". The fate of Lazarenko is an amazing fate. He was one of the few in the

State Security Committee who had extensive front-line experience as a combined arms commander and thorough operational intelligence training. By that time, Lazarenko had served twenty-one years in the army and nineteen years in the KGB. Lazarenko has a thousand people subordinate to him - KGB officers, soldiers-drivers of armored personnel carriers.

"Cascade" covers the entire territory of Afghanistan. Headquarters and administration in Kabul, teams in Ge

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rate, Shindant, Kandahar, Jalalabad, Ghazni, Mazar Sharif, Kunduz. Where does Lazarenko

begin? From the study of history. Yes Yes, exactly.

"I collected archival materials of the KGB from all over the Union," Alexander Ivanovich told me, "I studied history right up to the experience of the ChON detachments.

Indeed, in Afghanistan, classical intelligence methods were not suitable. Everything had to start from scratch. It worked for me"

several hundred agents. All are rooted in gangs. So, in order to meet with the agent, it was necessary to develop a whole military operation. How to check an agent? Well, we recruited an Afghan, he

claims he is ready to join a gang. What's next? In civilized countries, this is easily done, but try to "twist" it in Herat or Kandahar, in other places that are under the control of bandits. Very difficult".

Learned, as they say, on the march. And I must say, skillfully opposed both the CIA and Pakistani intelligence. Today,

everyone knows the airfield in Kandahar, where the Taliban captured our civilian aircraft and pilots. By the way,

these poor pilots were discussed more than once in conversations with the fighters of the Cascade and Vympel. The hearts of professionals ached for the impotence of our country. "Yes, I'll go around this Kandahar airfield with my eyes closed - I won't stumble," one of the veterans told me bitterly and offered his plan for the operation to rescue the pilots.

Indeed, everything he said did not seem to me the fantasy of a retired commando. And not only because a pensioner, by his age, could well have participated in this operation, but how strong and realistic his arguments and arguments were.

So, a very unpleasant story happened at this very airfield. At night, the sentry, who was guarding the aircraft parking lot, thought that an enemy infiltrator had crept up to the cars. Whether it was so or the soldier imagined, but he gave a short burst in the direction of the parking lot. Unfortunately, a bullet from the AKM hit the bomb's fuse. The fuse is nothing, a two-kopeck coin, but nevertheless there was a big trouble. From the explosion of a bomb that was under the wing of the car, three Soviet aircraft and three helicopters of the neighboring Afghan regiment were destroyed.

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Lazarenko urgently flew to Kandahar. The commander of the "Kandahar" group, Lieutenant Colonel Anatoly Aleinikov, reported the circumstances of the case.

Alexander Ivanovich invited the commander of the aviation regiment, suggested: leave the soldier alone, put him in the hospital. According to legend, he was wounded during the explosion. Spread the word: planes and helicopters were destroyed by the Mujahideen. The largest sabotage against the Shuravi was carried out. The regimental commander was

alert: I have no right. "Okay, orders Marshal Sokolov will be enough? Lazarenko asked.

On the same day the regimental commander received a telegram from marshal.

Aleinikov picked up three people from the "Kandahar" agents. They were prepared for a month to be sent to gangs. Every night, agents traveled twenty kilometers to the airfield. Returning from there, they described their route, the most visible landmarks, conspicuous trees, bushes, objects, told how they crossed the river. Soon, even to the most experienced instructor on the "other side", they could accurately, to the smallest detail,

describe the road along which they went "to sabotage" and returned back. In the meantime, the rumors reached their climax, and the bandits themselves began to look for the heroes-saboteurs who had

destroyed almost an entire squadron. Soon one agent ended up in a gang, the other two - in another formation of the Mujahideen. The legend worked, they were believed.

Moreover, they awarded, handed over large sums of money. Soon all three met in Peshawar, where they were honored as heroes. These were very valuable agents close to the top of the insurgency. Until now, the leadership of the "Cascade"

remembers how they helped to prevent the explosion of the Indian consulate in Kandahar. The provocation against the consulate was scheduled just at the beginning of L. Brezhnev's visit to India. The Soviet security officers, having received

undercover information, developed and carried out an operation during which a gang of saboteurs was neutralized.

I remember that in a conversation with me, the head of Department "C" The State Security Committee spoke about what they have in the museum

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there is a photograph of a man in a turban. This agent was a mullah. He served in one of the mosques in Kabul. On the eve of the October Revolution, he gives information about the attempt on the life of the leader of Afghanistan, Babrak Karmal, was planned to be killed during a festive reception at the Soviet embassy.

This was reported to the Soviet ambassador, and the gang of terrorists was eliminated in time. Reserve Colonel

Sergei Shestov says: - I was in Afghanistan from 1980 to 1984. 5th zone is mine. First "Cascade", last year "Omega". The Omega division did not last long, it was transitional from Cascade to Vympel. The fighters are practically the same, seventy percent.

Today, few people know that we remained in Afghanistan even after the withdrawal of our troops. Remember, General Gromov came out on the last BTEer and reported. These footage went around the world. Meanwhile, our guys were sitting on the Afghan coast and rejoiced: "Thank God, our guys got out safely." In fact, the border guards and we were the last to leave. As for the events themselves, frankly speaking, there is something to remember. In this zone, we managed to carry out a unique operation in our own way, as a result of which a whole tribe was saved - 175 people. And my "stuntmen" are only 16 fighters.

At first, the leadership did not give the go-ahead for this operation, and then a lot of both our press and the foreign press wrote: they say, unknown "shuravi" liberated the tribe.

I had to think a lot. Collect information, digest it in order to understand the plan and beat the enemy.

"Spirits" after all, too, tossed us puzzles. Well, for example, no one can understand why five tanks passed normally on the road, and the kitchen, the sixth, exploded.

At first they decided that they were blowing up on the radio. Understood, no, the radio has nothing to do with it. And why tear the kitchen with a guided mine? Puzzle. They

thought, searched, rechecked, and nevertheless found the answer: the "spirits" put tissue paper on the mine fuse. The paper is rubbed... and an explosion.

There was another case when my "stuntmen" took "live" French instructors - a woman and men

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Well. They pretended to be journalists. If I'm not mistaken, this was the first "live" capture of the instructors. By the way, somehow

I'll show Rutskoi a photo of my agent. It was he who brought the news that Alexander Vladimirovich was in a hospital near Peshawar. The agent then went to an unscheduled meeting and said: "Shuravi", who was shot down (and he was shot down in my zone), is somewhere there. I don't know if we were the first to get information about Rutskoi, but we got it. And this is the most important thing.

There were, of course, poignant moments as well. War is war. I remember that they carried out an operation, they did a search. Customs were respected: they did not enter the women's quarters. Just one of the women took advantage of this, pulled out a gun and almost shot me. The miss would not have happened, the barrel of the gun was in my face. Helped "stunt" training. That's how they worked. Now, looking back, I think

that the "Cascade" and later "Vympel" were very effective, so to speak, "point" units in localizing undesirable developments. After all, Chechnya could be localized in the bud, by operational means.

But they missed the time. However, these questions are no longer for the fighter special forces...

Today, rewriting the history of the Afghan war, some publicists are trying to present the Mujahideen as a kind of "freedom fighters" who, like a gentleman, fought only against the invaders - "Shuravi". Vympel fighters testify to something else: in various provinces there was not a day when spooks did not kill civilians - teachers, doctors, local activists. They poisoned water sources, set fire to hospitals and schools... There is no need to talk about sabotage and terror against Soviet military personnel. For this, the most vulnerable objects, unarmed specialists from the Soviet Union, were selected.

Here is just one example. On January 2, 1983, in the town of Mazar-i-Sharif, bandits attacked a Soviet convoy and stole a bus with sixteen Soviet specialists working at the elevator in an unknown direction. All available forces of the Cascade were thrown into the search. As it turned out, the terrorist operation was carefully and professionally prepared by the spooks. They are for

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earlier, they kidnapped the family of an Afghan bus driver, and, threatening to kill his wife and children, persuaded them to participate in the action.

And soon the unsuspecting Soviet workers were invited to celebrate the New Year holiday. In one of the city blocks, the bus was cut off from the column, and the driver drove it towards the outskirts of the city. A truck was already waiting there, where the hostages were supposed to be transferred.

The terrorists also skillfully prepared false information in order to set their pursuers on the wrong track. Bribed local residents said in Tsarandoy that they saw the bus on the way to the Marmul gorge. Units of the Afghan and Soviet armies were thrown into

the search, but the three-day military operation did not

results. Moreover, the body of one of the Soviet specialists, Shipulin, was found on the road. At the moment of capture, he resisted the bandits and died heroically. All this spoke of the sinister plans of the terrorists and the threat looming over the hostages.

In a completely different gorge, where a battle broke out, during which the bandits were driven out of the fortifications, they found a list of prisoners and Shipulin's pistol. Further traces of the

gang and the hostages were lost. Only intelligence could help. Thanks to well-trained agents, the Cascade employees knew the whereabouts of the gang, which went into the mountains, to the border with Pakistan, in a few days. Much became known about the terrorists—the gang belonged to the “irreconcilable,” and this further exacerbated the feeling of anxiety for the fate of the hostages. After some time, it became known that the bandits were going to execute the captives. The scouts

managed to organize a direct access to the leader of the gang. However, he set impossible conditions and constantly changed them, threatening the hostages.

There was no exit. In early February, military units of the Soviet army and the Afghan security service blocked the village of Vakhshah, where the bandits held captives. The troops were met with fire. The battle ended in victory, although with considerable losses for the Soviet and Afghan sides. Well, war is war. Learned to fight the army, studied

fight "Cascade". True, the "stuntmen" had their own methods.

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Sometimes well-organized operational work saved the lives of hundreds of people.

Agent Akhil, trained by the Cascade employees and sent to the gang, managed to give valuable information about the deadly truck, in the back of which there was more than a ton of the most powerful explosive - plastite.

The militants of the Islamic Party planned to blow up a truck near the Soviet hospital in Kabul. In the course of a well-designed operation, it was possible to intercept and neutralize the “cache on wheels”.

Akil's undercover work gave a wealth of information about the plans of sabotage activities of the Peshawar militants.

...These are just some of the episodes of the difficult and often invisible work of the special forces. The history of the Cascade has not yet been written. Time will write it.

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PART SIX INDULGENCE FOR TREASON AND TERROR

These two events almost coincided in time. In the early 90s, the 8th reconnaissance and sabotage department of the KGB Directorate "C" was closed, and the Vympel special unit

redirected to nuclear anti-terror. Of course,

these decisions were made at the command of the new, so-called "democratic authorities." Although, in fairness, it should be noted: some in the State Security Committee shied away from sabotage units like hell from incense. Now, unlike many other countries, we do not have a department or division. Adherents

of such a decision believe that this is how it should be, and as an argument they cite the assassination of Trotsky, the attempt on the life of generals Miller and Kutepov, and in the recent past, the assault on the Dar-ul-Aman palace in Afghanistan and the death of Amin.

Well, as they say, you can't throw away the words from the song, everything was in the history of our reconnaissance and sabotage service. However, today it is known for certain that the leaders of the country were the initiators of the murders of political and military figures, they gave orders, and the saboteurs only carried them out. So the reproach is not addressed.

Thus, if in Stalin's times traitors, political opponents were executed without trial or investigation, now the situation is diametrically opposite - defectors, terrorists who fled abroad and even convicted in the USSR or Russia are not touched by anyone. Great "democratic" Russia seems to forgive them generously. Well, you never know that sold from the root of the state

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important secrets, colleagues were given away and thrown into prison for many years, the blood of innocent victims

was shed... After all, they are now abroad, and the once mighty "hand of Moscow" turns out to be just a myth.

About Chechnya, especially about the first Chechen war, and I don't want to remember. For everything that happened to the Chechen terrorists is a national disgrace to Russia. Then the murderers of hundreds of Russian people, Basayev and Raduyev, swaggered every day on the screens of our television, threatened to continue the war, and their bloody henchmen freely visited Moscow, the highest Russian leaders shook hands with them. In October 1996, the newspaper Izvestia told about such

an unprecedented criminal fact: "The circle is closed. In Budennovsk, Basayev's right hand was Aslan Ismailov, who was present at all telephone conversations with Chernomyrdin.

Today, Colonel Ismailov, who is on the federal wanted list, is the commandant of Grozny, and he, as part of the Yandarbiev delegation, visited Moscow again for negotiations with the prime minister. For greater persuasiveness,

Izvestia published two pictures. Basayev in Budennovsk by the phone, next to him is Ismailov, and in the second photo - the terrorist Ismailov at the negotiating table in Moscow.

The correspondent of the newspaper cites other names of Chechen

terrorists responsible for the Budyonnovsk tragedy. It turns out that Yunus Nasagaev was caught in Grozny in the spring of 1996, along with a group of militants. He was preparing a new attack. And what? No sooner had Nasagaev been brought to the Stavropol pre-trial detention center for interrogation than a "high" order came - to deliver the terrorist to Khankala, where he was later released on a "restriction not to leave".

These facts are somewhat forgotten today. It's a pity. They must always be remembered. True, now Raduev is already in prison, and many of his colleagues in the criminal "terrorist business" have been killed or arrested. But Basayev, Khattab and other bloody terrorist leaders are still at large. That is why those shameful days of the first Chechen war must not be forgotten. And yet we will try to understand calmly. Probably, what happened in Stalin's times and what is happening now are extremes. But then what is the golden mean? Let's start with political assassinations.

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This century is filled with the blood of monarchs, presidents, prime ministers. Presidents of Chile Salvador Allende, Guatemala - Castillo Armas, Afghanistan - Mohammed Daoud, Mohammed Taraki, Hafizula Amin, Venezuela - Chalbo K. Delgado, Liberia - Samuel Doe, South Vietnam - Ngo Dinh Diem, Lebanese Republic - Beshir Zhmael, Rene Muvvad, USA - William McKinley, John F. Kennedy, Iran - Mohammed Ali Rajai, Bangladesh - Zia Ziuar Rahman, Panama - Jose Antonio Remon, Egypt - Anwar Sadat. Among those who died a violent death were the Prime Ministers of Grenada Maurice Bishop, Bolivia - G. Villarroel, India - Indira

Gandhi and Rajiv Gandhi, Japan - Inukai Hamagutsi, Sweden - Olof Palme. In addition, King Carlos I of Portugal, Grand Vizier of Turkey Pasha Talaat, King Mohammed Nadir Shah of Afghanistan, King Umberto I of Italy, King Faisal of Saudi Arabia
fell at the hands of assassins.

As for Russia, it was no different from other states. The Russian Emperor Nicholas II was executed, Prime Minister Pyotr Stolypin was killed. Let me remind you that we are talking only

about the 20th century. If we look into the depths of history, we will not meet any names here - starting from Servius Tullius, who ruled in Rome in 578 - 534. BC e. and fallen as a result of a conspiracy, to Israeli Prime Minister Rabin, who was assassinated in the fall of 1995.

Judging by the names of the victims and their number, humanity will not soon establish a "moratorium" on monstrous executions. And is it even possible in principle? Hard to say. However, the modern community found the strength to keep the nuclear threat in check. Maybe someday it will rise to such moral heights when the very act of terror against the leader of the country becomes impossible.

For now, this is not the case. And we live in a real cruel, bloody world. Let's not forget:
it's not just about political leaders and

in attempts on them. There are traitors, criminal murderers, terrorists hiding abroad. Russia has enough such "clients".

First, traitors. Soviet traitors are a special people. After they paid the new owners with the secrets of the former Motherland and the fate of fellow intelligence officers, they are still trying in every possible way to whitewash themselves.

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And some are so zealous that it is just right to include them in the lists of national heroes of the Fatherland they have sold. You

read a book by Arkady Shevchenko, a Soviet diplomat who remained in the United States, and it seems that before you is a pure and disinterested person who loves democracy with all his heart and hates totalitarianism. Is he accused of spying for the United States? What are you talking about, these are the intrigues of the KGB in order to discredit the honest name of a freedom fighter.

And the wrestler turns out to be just a "mole", a CIA agent who sells the secrets of his Fatherland in the bud. But he could not even suspect that the "call girl", a professional prostitute, to whom Shevchenko paid a generous salary of 5 thousand dollars a month, would also take up a pen. And he'll write a book, The Defector's Mistress. The name on the cover is Judy Chavez. Here is an excerpt from the book: "Another time, lying in bed, he asked if I wanted

to know if he was or was not a CIA mole. One magazine claimed that Andy began working for the CIA long before deciding to stay in the United States. He told me that "mole" in spy jargon means an agent who collects information for a long time and passes it on only after moving to another camp.

"So you were a 'mole'?" He paused, then answered quietly, "Yes. I didn't

react to it at all. He coughed and, very upset, went to the toilet. My indifference hurt him. Still: to share such valuable information with a girl who does not care at all!

I don't think comments are needed here. Well, except to answer the question, where did Shevchenko get money for life, pay for a prostitute, gifts? After all, as the same Judy describes: once the CIA agents who were following Shevchenko asked how much he pays her? "Three and a half a month," Chavez lied. Agents admitted that this is quite normal. I wonder what they

would say if they knew the true figure. After all, thousands of dollars were from the pockets of the CIA and the FBI. All of America now knows about it. I have already mentioned Oleg Lyalin, who escaped from the London

residency. He was a British agent. By their own

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Lyalin's dexterous qualities were ill-suited for reconnaissance work.

R. Rowan, in his fairly well-known book *Essays on the Secret Service*, published in our country back in 1946, writes: "A secret agent must not only be devoted to business and duty, but also be deprived of a sense of selfishness. He must be free from all boasting and other manifestations of intemperance. He must be equally truthful and morally stable ... "

Nothing like Lyalin, alas, did not possess. He was addicted to alcohol. He dragged after women, was talkative and boastful. By the way, this was noticed by the father of his mistress, an old Chekist who wrote a letter to the KGB after meeting with Lyalin. Being a guest at their house and having taken a fair amount of alcohol, an employee of the 13th department immediately blurted out that he was not some simple KGB captain there, but an illegal intelligence agent, working in England. The letter got to the deputy head of the department, Colonel Vlasov, but he brushed it aside,

arrogantly inscribing his resolution: "Nonsense." But the old Chekist was not mistaken. The "talkative KGBist" fled with his next mistress. He rattled out all our agents he knew anything

about. Plus, 105 exiled Soviet diplomatic staff and extreme difficulty in the work of the London residency. Recently, in one of the newspapers, the head of the SVR press service, General Yuri Kabaladze, said about Lyalin: "He went into the shadows and lived quietly with his wife until his death in some English county." He

lived calmly... Meanwhile, his fellow intelligence officers, who had been issued to him, were languishing in prisons. This is what social justice is. The lie that Andropov gave the order to kill Lyalin. Firstly, such a decision was beyond the

competence of the chairman of the KGB. Secondly, if it had taken place, Lyalin would have been taken out anyway. "We repeatedly turned to

Brezhnev with a request to remove some traitors," said the former deputy head of the 13th department, Major General A. Lazarenko, "but we were not allowed to. The General Secretary did not write anything on the letter. What message

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Well, it did come back. This meant the refusal of the Politburo. We could remove Lyalin and other traitors - Gordievsky in London, Shevchenko in the USA.

By the way, about Gordievsky. He betrayed our illegal immigrants - husband and wife. Betrayed during the period when the scout was pregnant. The husband knew about the surveillance. He analyzed his actions, looked for reasons where he could make a mistake. Searched and couldn't find.

The scout was on the verge of a nervous breakdown. The wife stopped operational work, placed her husband in the hospital, gave birth to a child ... "And then,"

General Drozdov writes in his memoirs, "I found the strength in myself to send everyone across foreign borders to Moscow, knowing that the British counterintelligence was following on their heels. Such betrayals are not forgotten, Gordievsky. We could remember something else, but it's too early.

So, he betrayed the illegal immigrants Martynovs with two young children. He sold in cold blood, demonstrating to his new owners how he carried out the transfer of illegal immigrants... ...He protected himself, knew

that our security service did not stop looking for a leak channel, a traitor. He gave himself away by showing extreme interest in his personal friends, with whom he once studied, then active illegal immigrants, whom he wanted to sell to his masters - after all, 30 pieces of silver had to be worked off. He was able to get away, but we rescued these and other illegal immigrants from the noose that the enemy

special services were trying to tighten around their necks. Some were literally torn from the hands of the enemy. Gordievsky's betrayal caused some damage to many intelligence units. We have overcome it. The

sentence handed down to him remains in force, and no opportunistic indulgence will cancel it.

Our television from time to time bastardly "warmly" talks "about the fighters for democracy" - Gordievsky, Rezun. He even touchingly sheds a tear over the traitors winding around the city (allegedly knocking KGB agents off the trail).

No need, gentlemen. Nobody catches up with them today. And the fact that they are afraid, they tremble, well, such is the fate of traitors. Although it is unlikely that anyone will come for him. What a

pity... And, finally, murderers and terrorists.

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It is Basayev and Khattab that we hear about today. But is it just them? Next to the same Basayev in Budyonnovsk there were more than a dozen terrorists. Thanks to the efforts of the investigation team of the Prosecutor General's Office, the names of almost all the bloody bandits have been established. And 20 people who organized and led this murder even ended up in the Interpol file cabinet. I don't know how Interpol is, but Russia must betray

each of them to the court.

Moreover, there is no statute of limitations on the crimes of terrorists. If the country's leadership had the political will. Today she is. How it will be next - we'll see. Speaking of political will. There are enough such examples in the world. As for the executors of this

will, I am sure that there will be patriots. For they were in every country.

Consider Israel, the feat of Peter Malkin, a counter-terrorism consultant. It was he who stole in 1960 and smuggled out of Buenos Aires the Nazi criminal Adolf Eichmann, "the final solution to the Jewish guiding problem." Eichmann Israeli intelligence lived in Argentina under the name Ricardo Clement. was on his

trail, and experienced operative Malkin organized the kidnapping. For several days, the Nazi was kept in a safe house, and then, dressed in the uniform of an El Al airline steward, they were taken out of Argentina.

Adolf Eichmann was executed in Israel, he was burned and his ashes

scattered over the Mediterranean. Israel

did it confidently, without looking back at anyone's opinion. And he did it right. For there will always be forces that will try to justify Nazis, terrorists, murderers.

After all, why did Eichmann have to be kidnapped? Yes, because the Israeli government was sure that Argentina would not extradite a Nazi.

Unfortunately, in Europe too, some courts, especially in Austria, acquitted the Nazis. And look how many Chechen terrorists now have defenders. This says only one thing: Russia should firmly

bring the work begun to the end. Murderers and terrorists, wherever they are, must sooner or later be brought to justice. If for this someone needs to be kidnapped, it is necessary to kidnap. 337

It so happened that for many years studying the biography of Ernesto Che Guevara, I try not to lose sight of the fate of the murderers of the legendary Cuban revolutionary. And here's the thing. Che Guevara was captured on October 8, 1967, tortured and executed the next day. Since then, thirty years, everyone who was involved in the murder and

tortured by Comrade Che, do not die a natural death.

The peasant Honorato Rojas, who betrayed the partisans, for which he later received a farm from the Bolivian president, was killed two years later by a shot in the back of the head.

Captain Mario Vargas, who ambushed Che's associates Guevara, soon after the dramatic events went crazy.

The commissar of one of Guevara's detachments, a member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Bolivia, Inti Peredo, was tracked down by the police in La Paz. In the skirmish, Che's faithful companion was killed. Police agent Roberto Quintanilla, who led the liquidation of the Inti Peredo group, was appointed as Bolivian consul in Hamburg as a reward. But even there he could not escape retribution. In 1971, the German police found the corpse of the consul with three bullet wounds.

Bolivian President Barrientos himself died in a plane crash in 1969. It is difficult to say whether these

murders were deliberate or accidental. Although, to be honest, there are too many strange coincidences. But there is no evidence that either Cuban or Bolivian intelligence services were involved in these deaths.

Of course, there are hundreds of specialists among the killers of Che Guevara. A special task force was set up in Washington to eliminate the Che Detachment, headed by Brigadier General William C. Sker, Chief of Intelligence for the Southern Command.

The American "rangers" were preparing a detachment of 600 Bolivian thugs. CIA agents recruited agents from local residents. The progress of the preparation of the operation was reported to the adviser to the US president, to the Pentagon, to the director of the CIA.

It is known that proposals were made to send regular units of the US Army there, but Johnson did not want to get a "second Vietnam", and therefore Che Guevara was removed by hand

Bolivians. I

tell all this in order to remind you of the role
USA in political assassinations. By the way, to this day

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none of the political assassinations committed by the American intelligence
agencies is put forward as a decisive argument for the dispersal of these
intelligence services. In one

of our newspapers, I read a report that after the appearance of revealing
materials about the involvement of the CIA in the assassination of the Prime
Minister of the Congo P. Lumumba and the dictator of the Dominican Republic
R. Trujillo, as well as numerous attempts to assassinate Fidel Castro, the US
Congress held hearings on this issue. As the author writes, at the hearings "the
leaders of the CIA felt far from comfortable." This, it turns out, is how they act
in a country with a two-hundred-year-old democracy. They will cut that it will not
seem enough. We

have different traditions. Some will disperse in one fell swoop, uproot, they
will not leave a stone unturned. Walk to your health

Basaevs and Khattabs, live quietly and die peacefully in the distant English
county of Lyalins, water your former homeland with slops of Gordian and
Rezun. You have nothing to fear for your past and future crimes. But I see
Russia differently. Strong and proud. She will be like this.

And then we'll see if they will tolerate you further.

DO WE NEED SWAT?

This was only a few years ago. In 1997, in one of my books, I wrote: "In
the sweet songs of corrupt politicians and journalists, the "nuclear club" of the
North Atlantic bloc turns ... into a" palm branch of the world ". In words, of
course. They say we have to trust NATO. Why? After all, they never believed
us. Remember when Nikita Khrushchev threw nuclear missiles to Cuba, under
the noses of the Americans? Then John Kennedy did not really believe
Khrushchev and did everything so that Soviet missiles were removed overseas.
Yes, we can say that now it's the 90s, not the 60s, it's not Khrushchev at the
helm of the country, and the

situation in the world is different, and democratic Russia is not the
totalitarian Soviet Union. Everything can be said."

Yes, now after the NATO strikes on Yugoslavia, the political
rhetoric has undergone some changes. Few have

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us in the country confesses its love for NATO. Even the most loving Westerners.
Although it is difficult to say how long it will be? The ancient wisdom of the

people says: believe not in words, but in deeds. And how, by the way, have
our relations with NATO evolved in recent years? There can be only one
answer: all Soviet-and later Russian-NATO relations are far from democratic
and equal. By force, pressure, diktat and some other not very advertised
"methods of influence" NATO

achieved what a dozen years ago could not even dream of.

Let's go back to our recent past. Gorbachev - General Secretary, and then the first president in the history of the USSR. The foreign press wrote that in terms of the breadth of the power received, M. Gorbachev can only be compared with Stalin.

He directs his "immense powers" to a good cause
The destruction of the Berlin Wall and the unification of Germany.

At that time, an interview with N. Portugalov, adviser to the President of the USSR, appeared on the pages of the German magazine Der Spiegel: "New relations between Russians and Germans," Portugalov said, "give the USSR a chance to return to Europe and save itself from the impending economic catastrophe. German assistance will allow the Soviet Union to create a system of a truly market economy, partly pay off its debts and carry out the withdrawal of troops from Germany without leaving the soldiers returning from there to their fate.

How interesting to read all this a decade later. So, with German money, they decided to save themselves from the disaster, create a market, pay off their debts a little and withdraw the troops.

Gorbachev and his entourage could not but understand, taking a step towards the unification of Germany, what global economic, political, military-strategic changes it would entail, what truly "tectonic" processes would cause.

So, in fact, it happened. And NATO tanks at the gate
Brest - this is the result of those very "processes".

Let's see how events unfolded. And they developed in a very interesting way. This should be written in detail and inserted into school textbooks. So that from childhood they knew, studied and swore not to repeat the Russian shame. The first thing that arose in the newly emerging

situation in Europe, this is a very tempting idea: to take and

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disband both military blocs, which have been opposing each other for many years.
This

thought first visited the heads of the generals. The retired West German General G. Schmückle, who in 1978-1980 served as Deputy Supreme Commander of the NATO Allied Forces in Europe, in an article in the Spiegel magazine devoted to European security, proposed: to abandon the old military-political structures, disband the North Atlantic bloc and the Warsaw Treaty and create instead of them a new Euro-Atlantic security system, including the current zone of responsibility of NATO and the Warsaw Pact. He was echoed by the Chief of Staff of the Allied Forces of the Warsaw Pact, General of the Army V.N. Lobov: "The Soviet Union and other members of the Warsaw Pact are in favor of the simultaneous dissolution of

both European military-political blocs."

However, the politicians were not as naive as the generals. R. Reagan spoke more clearly than others. In the pages of the German press, he declared that the North Atlantic Alliance "should not be dissolved under any circumstances."

Everything is clear and crisp. Equality is complete. Warsaw Pact should be disbanded, NATO "by no means".

On that, in fact, it all ended. The Warsaw Pact was dissolved, NATO was strengthened. The next stage is to resolve

the problem of whether the new Germany will enter the North Atlantic bloc or whether it will be possible to neutralize it. Indeed, a tempting prospect: Germany is a neutral country.

The first half of 1990 was spent in protracted diplomatic "battles". On the one hand, the Soviet Union. On the other hand, the victorious countries in the Second World War - the USA, England, France. Germany, as the main object of the struggle between East and West, also did not remain indifferent.

What were the positions of the parties? The West, as a united front, advocated the entry of a united Germany into the North Atlantic Alliance. The East, that is, the Soviet Union, protested. Here, to be honest, Gorbachev was waiting for a

softening of positions. dove
"good" for the unification of Germany, he really counted on

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compliance of the leaders of the leading Western countries. And this would mean real dividends of Gorbachev's foreign policy in the eyes of his own people. Europe choked in praise of Gorbachev.

Germany was beside herself with the euphoria of unification, but no one at the round table was willing to give in. Not one step, not one iota.

An example of this is the position of the "iron lady" Margaret Thatcher.

"The history of Europe should not be ignored, therefore it is necessary to achieve clear guarantees for the unconditional membership of a united Germany in NATO and the EU," she said in an interview with German television.

But what about the tragic history of the Soviet state? Or should it have been "ignored" for the sake of the "history of Europe"? Only France, through the mouth of its Minister of Foreign Affairs, R. Dumas, expressed understanding of our position and expressed a cautious fear: if the legitimate security interests of the USSR are not taken into account, Moscow may block the process of European detente and disarmament. Could Gorbachev do it? Without any doubt. As did his predecessors.

However, he went the other way. At the third session of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, he unexpectedly put forward the idea of Germany's associated

membership in both NATO and the Warsaw Pact.

Gorbachev's new initiative for Germany's "dual membership" was rejected out of hand by the West. G. Kohl called it unrealistic. So, defeat again. However, it does

not discourage Gorbachev either. The President of the USSR puts forward a new proposal. This time he is ready to agree to the entry of a united Germany into the NATO bloc, but with one condition ... It was announced that the Soviet side would agree to the membership of the united

Germany into NATO, if this alliance turns from a purely military one into a political one. It is

interesting that in a few years the Russian leadership will call for the "wonderful" transformation of NATO into that same "dove of peace." The answer was the same as given to Gorbachev seven years ago. It would seem that everything has changed, and even Clinton calls us "democratic Russia." But NATO is unchanged. How so? 342

But let's go back to 1990. After a meeting with US President George W. Bush, Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany G. Kohl announced that by the autumn of this year the consent of the Soviet Union for the full membership of a united Germany in NATO would be obtained. This message was heard on RIAS radio in early June 1990.

However, the Chancellor was wrong. Gorbachev and Shevardnadze surrendered much earlier.

In June 1990, in Berlin, at the Niederschenhausen residence, another round of negotiations took place according to the 2 + 4 formula, during which the foreign policy aspects of German unification were discussed. Here, as reported in the press, "the

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR acquainted the participants of the meeting with the new Soviet proposals." Oh, how different they were from the original! Remember

dissolution
blocs, the transformation of NATO into a political organization.

What did Shevardnadze "ask" for at this meeting? He persuaded Germany to reduce its armed forces to 200-250 thousand people, and the number of troops of the victorious powers by 50 percent. And finally, at the official opening ceremony of the

Check Point Charlie checkpoint on the border between East and West Berlin, he screwed up yet another "initiative": all military contingents must leave Berlin 6 months after the unification of Germany. As for the reduction of the German army, this proposal seemed to the leadership of Germany nothing more than interference in

their internal affairs. The foreign ministers of the three victorious countries, in turn, stated that any form of discrimination against the German state is unacceptable. By how many percent to reduce

military contingents, they wanted to decide for themselves.

On the same day, German television reported: "The package of initiatives put forward by the Soviet Foreign Minister was received by the Western participants in the negotiations more than coolly."

And the last, perhaps the most striking quote. These remarkable words have never been published in our Soviet Union. It's a pity.

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They make it possible to fully experience the magnitude and significance of the "success" of our diplomacy on the fundamental problem of the "German question - the bloc affiliation of the new German state."

So, attention. German Foreign Minister G.-D. Genscher emphasized that "only a fully sovereign Germany could bring stability to Europe. Therefore, preparations should begin now for the withdrawal of Soviet troops from the territory of the GDR. Here you are, grandmother, and St. George's Day! Thus, Gorbachev and

Shevardnadze "blessed" the entry of a united Germany into NATO. However, there were still several major unresolved issues. The dominant issue was undoubtedly nuclear weapons. "On the territory of West Germany," emphasized at the end of 1990 the leading Soviet Germanist, then head of the international department of the Central Committee of the CPSU, Valentin Falin, "so many nuclear weapons are concentrated that it will be enough to destroy all life on the planet."

M. Gorbachev proposed to clean up from deadly weapons forests not only in the GDR, but also in the FRG.

His assistant N. Portugalov, referring to the problem of the unification of the GDR and the FRG, demanded the complete withdrawal of the atomic weapons stationed on the territory of West Germany. How did the US and NATO respond to this? In October 1990, Radio Free Berlin reported, citing the Munich newspaper Abendblatt: "The US military leadership has developed a secret plan according to which American bombers stationed in the FRG will be equipped with new nuclear bombs."

I do not presume to say whether there was such a plan, but if there was, it would not make sense to reduce it unnecessarily. Indeed, already in December of the same year, at a session of the NATO Military Planning Committee, the German delegation stated that "the government of the Federal Republic of Germany does not object to the continued presence of American nuclear bombs in the country." Actually, this can be considered a response to Gorbachev's

"demand" for the complete withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territory of West Germany. Remember how in the old song of V. Vysotsky: "We send them, what are you doing there? And they sent us back..."

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I don't know what countermeasures Gorbachev and Shevardnadze took through diplomatic channels, but in the Western Group of Forces they began frantically dismantling missile brigades, divisions, and removing nuclear warheads. Really, the Germans were worried in vain, the work went quickly, without delay. Moscow inspectors urged on the rocket men, despite strict instructions, and often even safety rules. Thank God, everything worked out, the Soviet warheads were sent home, and already on October 22, 1990, at the fourth meeting of the mixed Soviet-German commission, it was announced: there are no Soviet nuclear weapons on German territory. But what about the "requirement" of the leadership of the USSR? As early as September 11, 1990, German television reported that the Minister of Foreign Affairs

The USSR, having met on the eve of the round of negotiations on the 2 + 4 formula with the heads of the foreign affairs agencies of the United States, Great Britain and France, insisted on a complete ban on the deployment of nuclear weapons on German territory, and a day later gave the green light to their deployment. What happened during these days? Soviet diplomacy won another victory?

As the Berliner Morgenpost newspaper reported in September 1990: "On the eve of the signing of the treaty, mutually acceptable solutions were found on the last controversial issues. With regard to weapons systems capable of being used in both conventional and nuclear weapons, the treaty prohibits their deployment on the territory of East Germany. That's the way out. Here is a mutually acceptable solution. And what about the territory

of East Germany and what, in essence, does it matter for the flight of a modern nuclear missile? If the entire territory of Germany in its length from the western village of Zelfkant (North Rhine-Westphalia) to the Saxon village of Dershka in the east is 640 kilometers, what can we say about its tiny eastern part. Such a distance is not an obstacle for conventional today's weapons, and not only for aviation, strategic, and even tactical missiles in nuclear equipment. Needless to say, an ingenious compromise! Only he, unfortunately, has absolutely nothing to do with the security of the Soviet, and now the Russian state.

How sad to write about it. Dust in the eyes
own people, settled, soap bubbles of diplomacy

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burst. Anyone who has a mind will think about what happened.

Now that a united Germany has joined NATO, and its territory still hosts nuclear weapons "enough to destroy all life on the planet," Gorbachev has one last trump card left: the largest military group in the world, the Group of Soviet Forces in Germany,

Representatives of the USSR Ministry of Defense adhered to a radical point of view. Thus, General of the Army V. Lobov, Chief of Staff of the Warsaw Pact Allied Armed Forces, unequivocally believed that "Soviet troops should be on German territory as long as the American group remains there." General G. Batenin, an expert of the Central Committee of the CPSU on military issues,

also spoke in favor of the presence of Soviet Union troops in Germany. Their number, he suggested (like the number of American troops), should be determined on the basis of the Vienna agreements and the results of the Helsinki II meeting.

Another senior official of the Central Committee, a Germanist, the future Russian ambassador to Berlin, Valentin Kopteltsev, speaking in the German press, stated: "All 4 victorious powers have equal rights in relation to Germany ... We cannot allow the Americans to find themselves in a more preferable position, than Russians. True words, to be sure. But, unfortunately for us,

Americans had a different opinion. Quite the opposite. Reuters reported in March 1990: "US Secretary of State John Baker criticized projections that the government of a united Germany might ask the US to withdraw US troops. It is far more likely that the Russians will be asked to leave."

The Russians indeed soon began to hint, pointing to the door. Thus, the chairman of the CDU / CSU faction in the German Bundestag, A. Dregger, once remarked: "The presence of Soviet troops on the territory of the GDR is a "remnant" and has lost all meaning".

Perhaps Mr. A. Dregger was right. But I don't get it, if the presence of Soviet troops is a relic, then the presence of American troops is what? After all, both of them came here as winners, and these rights, in accordance with well-known international treaties, are exactly the same. So, maybe the reader of the magazine is right

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la "Spiegel", who sent a very interesting letter to the editor - a response to the article "What to do with the Russians?"

Here is his opinion: "When politicians and journalists demand the immediate withdrawal of the Soviet "occupation forces", while insisting on maintaining the military presence of our Western "friends" until the 21st century, this borders on schizophrenia." You read these lines and, really, you become uncomfortable.

The world seems to be turned upside down.

The German layman thinks the way a Soviet president should think. And, by the way, defends his point of view. The Soviet President, on the contrary, agrees with the opinion

chairman of the CDU / CSU faction and does as he is advised.

Or maybe all this is not true? The world is still the same. And Gorbachev does not share Dregger's views at all. But then why does he himself propose to withdraw the Western Group of Forces from German territory? I emphasize myself. Essentially unilateral.

In July 1990, Kohl flew to Moscow. And so, during the negotiations, Gorbachev confidentially tells his German colleague how he threw US President George W. Bush into bewilderment. "In a conversation with Bush, I stated quite clearly that the presence of American troops in Europe is a stabilizing factor."

Bush couldn't believe his ears. He was waiting for a fight. Heavy, stubborn. And that would be perfectly understandable. The Soviet Union is not overseas, its borders are in close proximity to Germany. Here, on the shoulders of the regiments of the divisions of the Western Group of Forces, rests the security of a great power.

And suddenly the Soviet president not only gives "carte blanche" to the presence of Americans in Germany, but also makes an unprecedented statement: the US troops are

stabilizing factor in Europe. "For Bush,"

Gorbachev admitted, "such a revelation came as a complete surprise..." How did Gorbachev explain all this? "Our position,"

he said, "changed after analyzing the realities in the world." What is this position of the head of a superpower that changes with extraordinary ease?

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What are these "changed realities" that give the right to sacrifice the interests of the country? Just yesterday, he categorically

refused to see a united Germany in NATO, and today, with a smile of an angel, he gave his blessing for this...

hot

thirsty

Yesterday I fought furiously for the withdrawal of nuclear weapons from the territory of the FRG, but then suddenly graciously forgave their presence under the nose of their own country. Why? In the name of what? Does the president of the USSR

understand that by announcing this to the whole world, by assuming unilateral obligations without any preconditions, he becomes a hostage of his own initiative? Now he is bound hand and foot by his own obligations. There is no way back. But the road ahead is not the path of the winner strewn with roses, but the bitter path of the petitioner, "beggars with a bag": give, for Christ's sake, for the withdrawal of troops, give for the arrangement of poor Russian officers. True, there was still hope for the "good will" of the West, for the neighbors in the "common European home", for their loyalty and

understanding.

We were understood, and Gorbachev's key idea of a "common European home" was not rejected from the threshold, but as for the withdrawal of troops, there was a hitch. And it soon became clear that neither the United States, nor England, nor France were going to withdraw their military contingents from Germany at all, and the talk was only about their reduction. By the end of 1990, everything was lost. United Germany

was part of NATO. The North Atlantic Alliance was not going to turn into a political organization. Western nuclear weapons were still placed in their positions. The former allies in the anti-Hitler coalition refused to completely withdraw their troops.

Thus, the strategic and military-political situation in the world has changed radically. It has changed over the centuries and is far from in our favor.

What to say after all of the above? The great Russian historian Klyuchevsky said that history teaches nothing, it only punishes for ignorance of its lessons. 348

And she punished. True, not yet us, but Yugoslavia. But who

knows who will be taught the next lesson? As for the question posed in the title of this chapter, it seems to me that after reading everything that has been said earlier, the reader himself will give an answer to it. Which? This is a matter of everyone's conscience.

I prefer the opinion of the legendary partisan, retired colonel Professor Ilya Grigoryevich Starinov: "A new war will be the end of the world. It is impossible to use nuclear weapons that will destroy humanity. We need to think about how to make the war safer for our people. And this can only be done with the help of special forces, which could disable important facilities, destroy the enemy, make him unable to strike without engaging him in battle, preserving and increasing their

strength.

Even Prince Golitsyn, Major General of the General Staff, thought about creating special units that would defend their rear and destroy the rear of the enemy. When it's needed." 349

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